The Witness A Tragedy

1814

PREFACE

TO SECOND EDITION.

A GREAT majority of the new plays are condemned in the first performance, and many of those which the public consents to tolerate are but little esteemed; it has therefore been thought, that, among the rejected pieces, some might be found not inferior in merit to those preferred by the managers; and that a selection of them would enable the lovers of the drama to appreciate the taste and judgment with which the management of the theatres is conducted, in relation to the refusal and reception of plays, and how far the assertion is correct, that the pantomimic state of the stage is owing to a decline in the dramatic genius of the nation.

With a view to supply the desideratum, this work was established; but after the appearance of the first number, the proprietors found several of their friends unwilling to confess that their pieces had been refused: others, who regarded the publication as a convenient vehicle for venting their spleen against the managers, and a still greater number of authors who, never having offered any of their productions to the theatres, would not submit to publish them as rejected. To meet, therefore, the wishes of all parties, the title was altered; and the principle extended to comprehend every description of manuscript plays. Indeed, the original idea of the projector was, to make a publication subservient to the vindication of the modern

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dramatic literature of England, from a charge of inferiority compared with that of France and Germany :—a charge which is almost universally made on the continent, and which some persons even among ourselves have admitted, without considering the circumstances which gave rise to it. He expected, in the prosecution of the design, that the public would be so convinced of the bad effects of the theatrical monopoly, as to think, at last, of interfering to procure some diminution of a grievance which tended at once to debase their own pleasures, and affect the character of the country, And the work was undertaken in the hope of introducing some degree of reformation into a great department of the national means of instruction.

Good taste is so nearly allied to good sense, that it is impossible to corrupt the one without having previously impaired the other. If the public taste be so corrupted, as the apologists for the present state of the English drama assert, it is a painful, an alarming consideration, and more dangerous to the future welfare of the country than all those excrescences in the government, to which theoretical quacks so loudly call attention, and endeavour to exalt themselves by offering to cure. But, as in all other matters the nation never thought more judiciously than it does at present, and as through a long course of political events of the most extraordinary nature, it has acted with an admirable constancy of affection for those institutions and principles which the experience of all ages had demonstrated to be the best, we will not believe that the good sense of England is so far impaired, as the public taste appears to be corrupted, judging from the exhibitions of the stage. For we know that the public has no choice in the exhibitions,—that it is not allowed to prefer, but only to condemn ; and

we do not think that what it submits to receive from the managers is generally admired. On the contrary, in all circles, the theatrical spectacles are despised: and we believe that the theatres are indebted for their chief support, more to the multitude of strangers constantly in town, and who have no other way of spending the evening, than to the established inhabitants. Mankind in quest of amusement are easily pleased, and crowds are always generous. If the audience applaud the show of the managers, it is because they are disposed for amusement, and do not measure their satisfaction by the merits of the performance. A regular frequenter of the theatre, however, can easily discriminate the applause excited by excellence, and the approbation bestowed on the endeavours of mediocrity.

The inclination for dramatic representation is, in the present age, more general, than it ever was before in this country. There is not a town of any consequence in the kingdom, without a regular theatre; few even of the villages are unvisited by the itinerant actors; and the whole of them derive their fund of entertainment from the two metropolitan houses. It must be evident, that so general a predilection cannot exist without some genius for the dramatic art being actively excited. Although every other thing is supposed to have acquired a private, a local, or a provincial reputation for excellence, before it receives the profitable approbation of the embodied intelligence of the kingdom in London, it so happens at present, that the fruit of this dramatic genius is brought before the metropolitan public in its crudest state, and that the audience in London, are obliged to hear and see performances, which are not worthy of being exhibited in the meanest country theatres. The

very reverse of this might be expected. It might be thought, before any play was brought out in London, that it had received the full applause of the provinces, and was honored with an exhibition in the capital, as the final criterion of its merit, and to confirm or annul the celebrity, which it had previously obtained. The origin of the present custom is well-known. The theatre was first established in town, and the country having acquired its taste for the drama from London, has continued under every alteration of circumstances, habitually to draw from the same source. The consequence is, that in the country the literary department of the stage is much better than in town, for only the best pieces are acted in the provinces, while all the bad are never heard of beyond the capital. Why is this the case? why is there a different rule for the plays and the players? Few actors have the assurance to make their first appearance on the London boards, and still fewer of those who do so, ever afterwards attain much distinction in their profession. Almost all the best performers, perhaps it may be justly said, that all the performers of the first class of every department, have had their fame in London before them, and have been summoned to the metropolitan theatres, by the voice and curiosity of the public. Might not some such rule as that which governs the performers, be established for the improvement of compositions for the stage? The very last stock Tragedy, properly deserving the name, was originally performed in a provincial theatre. We allude to the Douglas by Home. Perhaps, had it been first exhibited in town, its celebrity would have been less; it might even have failed, for the author would have been convicted, on the first night, of his plagiarism from the Merope of Maf-

fei, but the Douglas was brought out in a quarter where Italian literature has never been much cultivated.

It may be said that this example rather furnishes a proof of the utility of the custom of introducing the new pieces first in London. We think not. For, notwithstanding that the whole train of maternal anxiety in the tragedy of Douglas, is a most remarkable imitation of the same feeling in Merope, still the piece has great intrinsic merit, and beauties which fully entitle it to all the fame that it has obtained. Merit and beauties, however, which would not have been, probably, sufficient to have borne it up against the rash flippancy of newspaper criticism, especially as the mere charge of the plagiarism of parts, would have been extended to the whole. We are decidedly of opinion, that the high rank which Douglas holds among the stock pieces of the theatre, is owing in a great degree to the celebrity which it had acquired, before it was represented in London. It will also be recollected that when it was originally offered to Garrick, he rejected it as not likely to succeed in representation; because it possessed no boisterous incidents. Indeed the interest depends so much upon the merits of the dialogue, that the stage is more naked throughout the performance of Douglas, than in that of any other tragedy in the language.

The proprietors of the New British Theatre conceive, that authors, at last convinced of the smallness of the chance of getting any composition represented in London, will have recourse to the provincial theatres; and that in time the great audience of London, will become the arbiters of the poet's merit, as well as of that of the performers, without being obliged to endure the bald disjointed chat, which has so long been allowed to occupy the place of dramatic dialogue.

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If it shall appear, by this work, that the pieces rejected by the managers are in general as good as those which are successfully performed, the public will be enabled to judge how far the present system of management ought to be allowed to continue; for, admitting, that the expediency of continuing the monopoly may be justified, which, however, we do not think possible, it must still be granted, that some alteration is requisite, in order to accomplish that reformation in the British drama, which the public have a right to claim. We are little disposed to admire any thing French, especially in what relates to the consideration of public rights and popular interest, but still we must acknowledge that the mode of accepting and refusing plays at Paris, is greatly superior to what it is in London; and we think that if the monopoly of the stage must be continued among us, the public ought to obtain an alteration in the system, as far as relates to the authors. In Paris, the managers have no voice, as managers, in the approval or rejection of pieces offered for representation. The author presents his drama, with a list of the actors for whom the characters are in his opinion best adapted, and when the piece is read in the green room, the actors, severally, give their opinion as to whether it ought, or ought not, to be accepted. But in London, it is not known, by whose taste or judgment the plays are approved or rejected.

The public will derive another advantage from the establishment of this publication, if it meets with that encouragement, which an undertaking so greatly national deserves. It will enable the world to see how far the the modern dramatic genius of England is barren, as well as inferior. For the million of London being restricted to two theatres, it so happens, that for weeks, nay months

together, the same pieces are repeated, by which the very essence of amusement, variety, is almost banished from the stage. It is alleged, that this is owing to the popularity of the plays or of certain performers, in particular characters; but we do not think so. It is more owing to the want of competition. Few plays have of late years been performed, to which any lover of the drama has returned on account of the merits of the piece. But, until the crowd is successively satisfied, the lovers of the drama must abstain from their recreation, or run the risk of being satiated with a monotony of dullness.

Should there be no limitation to the number of nights which the same play may be annually repeated, since the public have but two places of dramatic entertainment, to which they can resort? We may frequent what tavern we please, reside where we choose, read what we will; but in our amusements we must be slaves to the patentees of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, as if the pecuniary accidents by which those gentlemen became the arbiters of the dramatic art, conferred on them any inclination to study what was most agreeable to the public, while they are actuated solely by motives of personal emolument. We, have, it is true, no better assurance for obtaining excellence in any thing, than by leaving it dependent on motives of private advantage, and the managers of the theatres, as much as any other traders, no doubt feel the influence of this principle. But what we maintain is, that they are not incited by the spirit of emulation; and that the inhabitants of London have no greater chance of being well served by having only two theatres, than the strangers would be, if the law had decreed that there should be only two hotels for their accommodation. If we expect excellence in the performances of the thea-

tre, we must subject the interests of the patentees to the effects of competition.

It is very extraordinary that, although the frequenters of the playhouse are probably as numerous as those of the established church, and that, although, of one kind and another, there are probably as many theatres in the kingdom as there are members of parliament, no law has yet been passed, or even proposed, for regulating this important branch of domestic polity. To what cause in so enlightened a country as England, are we to attribute the neglect of so great, so general an institution—an institution, perhaps, as essential to manners in a refined state of society, as the church itself is to morals? The stage has, in England, become almost as great an organ of public instruction as the pulpit. Is it proper that there should be no law to regulate what is taught from it, except the notions of one obscure solitary individual, the reader of plays in the Lord Chamberlain's department? It would be better if some of those who are so loud and vociferous for alterations in the state of the government, would look a little more to their private trusts; and evince that they really possess some capacity for directing national affairs, by the judgment and liberality with which they promote the interests of the drama—a department of domestic œconomy which has more permanent influence on the character of the nation, than the measures of any administration, and which, in a moral point of view, is infinitely more dignified and important than the objects of half of all the questions annually discussed in the House of Commons.

When a third theatre was projected some time ago, a dirty and fraudulent trick was practised for the purpose of deluding the country into a belief that the undertaking was not wanted. A paper was published, containing a list of

the London theatres, by which it was made to appear that there were no less than thirteen, capable of containing about thirty thousand spectators. We ask every man of candor in the metropolis if this be true. That there are thirteen public places, to which the inhabitants occasionally go in quest of amusement, we do not deny. We know, indeed, that there are not only thirteen, but that there are thousands; for we will not allow that the stuff and trumpery which is nightly despised by the successive visitors to almost every one of the places named in that list, deserve more to be regarded as legitimate dramatic entertainments, than the jollity and junkettings of the ale-houses. On the contrary, we do most seriously and conscientiously believe, that there is more humor, and as much elegance of dialogue, to be met with at the latter, as there is either to be heard, or hoped for under the present system, in the performances of the former. Let permission be given to the proprietors of all the thirteen places of resort, honored with the name of theatre, to exhibit whatever they please, and we shall cease to regard the public opponents of the third regular theatre as influenced by selfish motives. That several of the minor houses have attempted to introduce the regular drama, is a notorious fact; and the inference from it is conclusive. For their attempts were founded on observations deduced from experience. They felt that the senseless shows which they had been in the practice of exhibiting, were *not relished by the public, and saw that the regular drama was, after all, the only sure source of* emolument in theatrical speculations. Are not such surreptitious endeavours to encroach on the monopoly of the other theatres, a decisive proof, that the public taste is not to blame for the substitution of monstrous goblins, and

roaring madness, in the place of the natural spectacle, and colloquial poetry of the drama? When we are told by the mechanists and artists of the great playhouses, that the public taste is so depraved, that only shows and pantomimes can hope for success, let them also tell us, why those houses which were established only for such exhibitions, have endeavoured to abandon them, and why those speculators who believe in the corruption of the public taste, have been prosecuted for attempting to retrieve the consequences of their expense on shows and pantomimes, by the revival of the regular drama? The persecution of the proprietors of the Pantheon, has produced a sensation on the public mind more conducive to the emancipation of the stage, than all the complaints of disappointed authors. It has contradicted, beyond all power of equivocation, the improbable assertion, that while the public had grown more enlightened in every thing else, it had become more barbarous and foolish in its amusements. It has decided that the bellowing and slights of carpentry and coloring, which form the grand characteristics of the modern English stage, are really despised by the British public. It has established this truth, that the theatrical monopolists conceive themselves to have an interest in withholding rational dramatic entertainments from the public!

But while we thus distinctly state our opinion of the present mode of managing the literary department of the theatre, in justice to the managers we should add, that we do not agree with those authors, who complain of contemptuous treatment in the rejection of their plays. We cannot conceive the managers to be actuated by any insulting disposition, and when they send back a piece, with a laconic note stating, that they are of opinion it would not succeed in representation, they, undoubtedly, only fol-

low a general official rule, which they have found it convenient to adopt. It is very true, that the expression might be less seemingly arrogant, and that it would be more palatable were they to say that they thought the piece would not serve the interests of their concern; thus avoiding the ungracious appearance of censorial presumption; but the essence of rejection would still continue the same.

Whatever is established as a general rule, ought never to be felt as particularly applied. It is not to the terms in which the refusal is couched, that offence should be taken; indeed we do not see any cause for personal offence at all. But that there is something in the mode of judging plays without submitting them to the green-room, and which ought to be altered, we think is indisputable. At the same time, we also think that were authors to offer their productions, in the first instance, to the provincial managers, they would have a better chance of being treated, more according to what they fancy themselves entitled to, and run less risk of disappointment in the event of obtaining a representation. Surely there is no dramatic author who would not think the applause of a Bath, a Dublin, or an Edinburgh audience, a great step towards distinction. In our opinion, the audience in those cities are greatly superior to the inhabitants of London, in dramatic taste; for the standard of excellence is higher in the provinces than in the capital, owing to this simple and obvious cause— The provinces see only the best of the new plays, and are wholly untainted with the effects of witnessing the ordinary and the condemned.

The inhabitants of London, in judging of mankind, have, doubtless, some superiority over those of the country, but this very knowledge, which enables them to discrimi-

nate the motives of action with more acuteness, impairs the delicacy of the mental tact; and the mortification which most of them secretly feel on comparing their sense of the moral sublime and beautiful with that of their country friends, should teach them in matters of taste, particularly in what relates to the living representation of human actions, to be less confident in their judgment. If dramatic authors were sensible of this, before seeking to gain the profitable applause of the metropolis, they would endeavour to merit the honorable esteem of the provinces. How many of them would thus avoid the contempt to which they expose themselves, by seeing their essays exciting disgust at the first appeal! How many of those who, probably in consequence of the failure of their premature conceptions, have abandoned the cultivation of their talents, would perhaps by a gradual progression from the provinces to London, have attained fame and fortune from those very persons who could not endure their crude effusions! The public has no sympathy for the mortifications of authors. On the contrary, there is no other unhappy being supposed to be a fair object of ridicule, but a disappointed poet.

If authors could once be convinced that, notwithstanding all their own fine sayings about laurels and immortality, they are in fact but tradesmen; or if the epithet be less disagreeable, but a class of artists dependent on the wants and inclinations of the public for all their consequence, they would soon acquire some of that consideration which they claim, and which may perhaps be due to them. Could they be inspired with a portion of that spirit of incorporation, that fraternal spirit, by which the booksellers and players have become their masters, and could they be taught to act simultaneously, they would not fail of obtain-

ing that influence in the community, from which their jealousy of one another is the cause of excluding them. At present, authors, as a body, have no political consideration. There is no reason in the nature of things, why they should remain so. How does it happen that painters and sculptors are so much more important in society than literary men, and in England form a tribunal, whose awards guide the government and the legislature in matters of art? Is it not owing to their incorporation? Is the nature of authors so much more mercurial than that of painters and sculptors, that they cannot be incorporated? Would the institution of a literary academy do nothing towards the reformation of the stage? If such an academy were authorised to select the dramas offered for representation, would the arrangement not be more suitable to the dignity and importance of the trust, than that the power of licensing plays, should rest in an individual, a whole year of whose talents and merits is not thought worth half the value of one night's performance at Covent Garden theatre?

Had the claims, of "The New British Theatre" to public patronage, been founded on the exertions of those, who are interested in its success as a publication, that patronage would have been solicited with more diffidence. But this is not the case. The proprietors are only affording an opportunity for talent to manifest itself, and for mortified genius to appeal to the public against a sentence from which there is no other appeal. Their share in the merits of the work is absolutely nothing. They have only constructed a building, and opened it to the poets and to the world. In doing this they are actuated by a great public motive, and they are confident that the public will support them. By their success a reformation must inevitably ensue in the exhibitions of the stage, and the most

dignified of all the amusements of polished society will necessarily be improved. Diffidence in such a cause would be affectation. They expect the dramatic authors to furnish them with materials, and the lovers of the drama are too sensible of the benefits that must accrue to themselves, not to grant a degree of encouragement that will rather induce the proprietors to extend, than to renounce their undertaking. Nor do they fear that the liberality of the public will on this occasion be contracted, and the ultimate utility of the work estimated by the compositions in the early numbers. It must be obvious to every candid mind, that at first the materials are necessarily limited to the communications of private friends, and that unlike every other publication, this work may be expected less deserving of patronage, at the beginning than after it has been some time established. It is undertaken with the hope of effectuating some reformation of the English stage. Its merits will depend on the voluntary communications of dramatic authors, and to deserve them it must receive the indulgence, and share the wonted generosity of the public.

March, 1814

THE WITNESS;

A Tragedy,

IN THREE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

GLANVILLE, father of ARIETTE and REGINALD.
REGINALD, son of GLANVILLE.
JUDGE.
MAGISTRATE.
ADVOCATE.

ISBEL, the widow of a man who had been murdered.
ARIETTE, the daughter of GLANVILLE.
Officers and burghers in attendance

THE WITNESS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The Gate of a town seen at some distance.*

ISBEL. *Alone.*

ISB. Again the annual morning of my loss,
Brings all anew the loneness of my doom!
Again the sun, sole witness of the blow
Which left my husband, on this cursed spot,
A bloody corpse, looks on the murd'rous earth,
As if he saw the undivulg'd assassin,
And kept his bright and searching eye upon him
'Till justice come and seize. But nineteen years
Have drearily their dismal round completed,
Since the red horror of the crime was done,
And yet no chance to give suspicion scent
Has Providence permitted to arise.—
But though the mem'ry of my murder'd husband
Has perish'd from all others' thought but mine,
And from the unrequited villain's fear,
Time still shall prove eternal justice true,
And vindicate the vigilance of Heaven,
Wait therefore patiently, my widow'd heart,
Wait and expect, nor mourn the outward change
Which leaves me as a solitary wretch
Left in some wilderness, whose drear horizon
Is bounded by the sky. Th' embracing Heavens,
That show a limit round the sandy wild
And ocean's waste where never coast was known,
Gives to the faithful and religious eye
Th' assuring sign of providential care:
And in my lone estate, my widow'd loneness,
I still have found its sacred aid attend.
Yes! as the ravens fed the prophet's need,
With watchful constancy, still on this day
It ever sends the gen'rous Glanville here;—
And he will come, though his accustom'd hour,
(Alas, the hour on which my husband fell)
Be long gone by, and the sun near on noon.

[Enter REGINALD.]

Come, Reginald; where is thy father, youth?
He has not, as his wonted custom was,

Been here to-day. Surely he cannot fail
To think that always annual on this day,
He came as faithful as the sun himself,
To soothe my sorrow with his gifts and pity.
By this good constancy of kindness, he
Hath made a compact that he should fulfil.

Reg. Thou art offended, Isbel.

Isb. I have cause,
For never bond on legal vellum seal'd,
Gave stronger confidence to expectation
Than his successive visits gave to me
That I had still a friend.—If he be honest,
He will fulfil the compact he has made,
Nor balk my rightful hopes. If he do not,
I will a grievous penalty exact.

Reg. Nay, be not thus so heady and so wild,
Thou shalt not lose thy stated gift to-day.

Isb. I know that this day cannot pass unnoted.
It is an anniversary that Heaven
Doth make the holy angels keep with awe,
—Now looking down from their celestial seats,
Upon this cloudy orb of blood-stain'd men,
All wond'ring gaze to see what may befal.
But nineteen times they have the vigil kept,
And saving still some new distress to me,
Fate's dreadful purpose thickens unreveal'd.

Reg. But to our house it has been deem'd propitious,
And ever mark'd by prosperous events.

Isb. Yes, still on it, I know, some bounteous chance
Repaid thy father's charity to me.
But gentle Reginald, should he not come:—
For, as the fortune of your father's house
Has been advanc'd as he prov'd kind to me,
Shall it not fall again at his remissness?—
There is some secret tie between our lots,
Which strangely seem in adverse scales oppos'd;
Methinks, the scales of providential justice!
And when the one ascends, the other sinks.
—From that unhallow'd and unguarded hour
In which my husband was so grimly slain,
I have beheld the tide of fortune set
With a strong current that advanc'd your father,
Leaving me ebbed far upon a shoal,

Where nought presents itself to all my view,
But the white bones of a poor mariner,
Who in the dead defenceless hour of sleep,
Was by some dark and undiscover'd foe,
Cast from the shipboard down into the deep.
Blood will have blood, and Heaven heard Abel's cry.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room.*

ARIETTE and GLANVILLE.

Glan. Why looks my Ariette so sadly pale?

Ariet. The solemn magic of this poet's verse
Enchants my spirit into pleasing wonder,
Tinctur'd with holiest awe. His every thought
Hath, like the halo round the sainted head,
A heavenly and religious intimation.

Glan. What is his theme?

Ariet. A rude pathetic tale
How a poor damsel, hopeless died in sin.
Her mind was tender as the lacy film,
Woven at morning in the hawthorn blossoms,
And deck'd with gems of dew, which the soft gale
That breathes but fragrance, or the gentler stir
Of the fond linnet nestling with her young,
Shakes from the weeping boughs. Oft as the moon,
Round, full, and golden, fac'd the glowing west,
An evil spirit, faithful to the hour,
Came with persuasive dreams. Long she withstood
His soft seduction, and with flowing eyes,
That glimps'd like dew-drops in the moon's chaste light,
She pray'd her guardian angel to be watchful.
But there are times, as the sad poet sings,
When our celestial guards go up to Heaven,
With their account of that which we have done,
And in the interim, the unguarded hour,
Few can resist the instigating fiends.

Glan. Alas! 'tis even so!

Ariet. Sir, you seem mov'd!

Glan. There's an infection in such mystic tales
Which taints the heart with strange infirmity.
Read them no more; take books that treat of life;
The mind soon sickens that still feeds on verse,
The fruit of thriftless and distemper'd brains.

All the endowments of the Poet's mind,
That rich effulgence of bright-tinted thought,
Which wakes thy wonder, and inspires delight,
Are bred by ails in his corporeal frame,
As the gay glories of the tulip's flower,
Spring from disease engender'd in the root.

Ariet. You do amaze me, Sir. Never before
Did you forbid me, but was wont to praise
That subtile tact by which the Poets learn
Th' inscrutable affinities of thought;
And by some happy combination raise
Delicious pleasure from afflicting themes.
If this sweet Poet be not one inspir'd,
Surely fond nature, in some beauteous error,
Did reckless frame for such a world as this,
A mind so inexpediently fine.

[Enter REGINALD.]

Glan. Ha, Reginald, you look amaz'd.

Reg. Alas!
You have neglected your accustom'd visit
To the poor maniac at the city gate.

Glan. It is again the day!

Reg. She waits impatient,
Claiming the boon that you were wont to give
As due to her by some dread compact made,
And vowing vengeance if it be withheld.

Glan. She has, indeed, poor wretch, just cause to claim;
And I did fail in an imperious duty,
When I forgot the hour, th' unguarded hour!

Ariet. Ah, you have caught the Bard's romantic thought,
Your guardian Angel has been then away,
Else had you not so err'd! Why do you sigh?

Glan. That I should suffer such a breach of mind
As to forget the desolated woman,
Whose only claim in life is strong on me.—
Methinks I have a desperate forfeit made.
What did she say? you say she threaten'd, what?

Reg. 'Twas aimless boding, like the foul black bird,
That, perch'd upon the chain-hung murd'rer's head,
Croaks hideous and unutterable things.

Glan. Ah! [*The sound of a trumpet heard.*

Ariet. Hark!

Glan. Again!—
Ariet. What means that doleful sound?
Reg. It is the trumpet of the Magistrates,
As they proceed to greet the Judge's entrance
Into the town.
Ariet. Sad signal to the guilty.
Reg. You will be late for the procession, Sir.
Glan. I do forget myself. I am too late. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The gate of the Town seen at some distance, as in Scene I.*

GLANVILLE, an ADVOCATE, MAGISTRATE, &c.

Mag. Let us stop here. It is the wonted spot
Where ancient custom and our charter says,
We must do homage to the King's vicegerent,
And ask for Justice in the name of Heaven.
Glan. A little farther—nineteen years have pass'd,
Since we were wont to meet him at this place.
He may expect us, where we met last year.
Adv. It was a breach in your feudalities
To change the place.
Mag. True, Sir, but the sad cause
Which chanc'd upon the morning of the change,
Gave us some warrantry.
Adv. You did amiss
So to entrench on old prescribed tenures.
What was the cause?
Mag. Upon that solemn day,
A hideous murder was committed here,
Whereby the ground was foul with clotted blood,
And most unfit for our solemnity.
The circumstance I do not well remember,
But Glanville may.
Glan. Why, Sir, should I?
Mag. For you have ever with most constant kindness
Aided the widow of the hapless victim.
Alas, poor wretch! Grief has diseas'd her wit,
And but for him she were indeed forlorn.
Adv. I did observe her once, 'twas near this place,
And she appear'd so gaunt, and curs'd with spleen,
Blear'd in the eye, and blasted in the visage,
That all the reverence due to age forsook me,

And, as I look'd on her, methought her figure
Prov'd that the mind, and the external frame,
Fail, fade, and wither in companionship.
Could we but see, thought I, the soul of age,
We should a plain and true accordance find
In its affections with the alter'd features.—
The sharp and harsh projection of the bones,
Demonstrate pride and stern relentlessness;
The rheumy eye, wan Envy's master feature,
Proclaims the spite that grudges youthful pleasure;
The downward look evinces sordid thoughts,
Searching the very dust as 'twere for geer;
Th' trem'lous voice and shaking head denote
A graspless heart that hath forgone all love,
And hieroglyphics graven on the brow,
Long use of pitiless arithmetic.——

Glan. Forbear, young man! such fancies but insult
The course and purposes of Providence.
What though poor Isbel hath outliv'd your pity,
The time may come when you yourself shall know,
That e'en the power to pity quits the heart.
There is an epocha in human life,
When all men find their sympathies extinct.
In some the change, by wayward fortune wrought,
Falls in the prime and vigor of their days;
But with the general throng of daily minds,
The wintry solitude of age prevails,
Before the sear and withering of the heart.

Adv. What causes, think you, Sir, produce this change?

Glan. Sometimes the canker of ingratitude,
Gnaws out the fruitful germ of tenderness;
When, as the stifling ivy climbs the tree,
Barren misanthropy inverts the heart;
Sometimes the blossom of our vernal hopes,
Like the bright hectic of a fated fair,
Allures to disappoint: When it is gone,
We have no courage to expect again,
Nor ever lose aught worthy of a tear;—
The vampire vice too drains the bosom dry
Of Nature's kindness. But much more than these,
Is conscious guilt pernicious to our feelings,
Turning each thought, yea, ev'ry corporal sense,

Into one sentinel of accusation.
Hark! [*a trumpet heard.*

Adv. 'Tis the trumpet of the judge.

Glan. He comes.

Mag. On you the task to give him welcome lies.

Glan. Let us advance, then.

Mag. Sir, it must be here,
This is th' appointed place. Why should we move?

Glan. You are peremptory. Well, be it here.

Adv. He cogitates a speech.

Mag. Stand back.

Adv. The Judge.

[*Enter from one side the Judge attended. Isbel comes in at the same time from the other.*

Mag. His Lordship waits for us, Sir; give him welcome.

Glan. By old enactments of our ancient kings,
We are commanded, on this fatal spot,
In heaven's dread name to bid the judges enter,
And deal us justice without fee, or fear,
Of monarch or of man. Within our burgh,
Not in the King's, but in the name of God,
Tremendous Justice mounts her awful throne;
And Providence, as fam'd traditions tell,
Hath frequent there stood witness at the bar,
Confronting perjury that would destroy,
And proving guilt when far beyond all trace,
The links of human evidence had fail'd.
Therefore, my Lord, in Heaven's dread name we ask
Your righteous ministration.——Isbel, here!

Jud. In Heaven's dread name we do accept the trust.

Isb. [*aside*] 'Tis he, 'tis he that did the deed of death.

Jud. What is that woman, who with such a shriek
Of thrilling exultation, mars the course
Of our appointed high solemnity.

Adv. A wretched maniac.

Jud. Send her away.

Glan. Retire, good Isbel, you disturb our rites,
Pray thee retire, you do offend the Judge.

Jud. Give me the list of all who are accus'd.

Mag. 'Tis here, my Lord.

Isb. It wants, it has not all!

Jud. I know thee now. Alas, unhappy creature!
How long shalt thou the same sad note repeat?
Mag. For many a year, still as the list was given,
She has this melancholy protest made.
Jud. Who is accus'd that is not in the list? [*To* ISBEL.
Isb. Glanville.
All. Glanville!
Jud. Of what is he accus'd?
Isb. Murder!
All. Murder!
Isb. Secret and long conceal'd.
Jud. Say, who against him brings this dreadful charge?
Isb. I do, my Lord!
Adv. Woman, get thee away.
Jud. Let her alone.
Adv. She is a maniac.
Jud. Still must her accusation be receiv'd;
It is for such as know not how to claim
With legal form and advocated plea
Redress of wrong, that we in public here,
Receive the list of all accus'd delinquents;
If to the list exception be not made,
The guilty unaccus'd henceforth are free.
Glan. She ne'er, my Lord, suspected me before.
Jud. Nor any else, but only did protest,
Asserting Providence would prove the charge.
Be not so mov'd, Sir, at this wild conceit,
Though charter'd law compels us to admit it.
Isb. Justice, Justice, in Heaven's dread name remember.
Glan. It was, my Lord, a settled custom with me,
Upon the annual coming of this day,
Which still has been in all my life auspicious,
To bear myself a small benevolence
To this poor widow, as she mourning sat
Here on this spot, where her lov'd husband fell;
But by some lapse, some breach in my remembrance,
I did to-day neglect that stated duty,
And for the failure she in spite accuses.
Isb. No, not for that, no, not for that, my Lord!
Though by his punctual regulated kindness,
I thought he had a compact made with me

As sure as that which heaven holds with the earth,
To give the reaping and the fruitage time.
And when he came not, I did think, 'tis true,
That he incurr'd, for the default he suffer'd,
A dreadful forfeit which I would exact,
But then I knew not that my words of passion
Were prompted by an oracle divine.
On to the hall and mount the seat of Justice.

Glan. O thou vindictive and ungrateful witch,
The source of kindness backward works in thee,
Or thou would'st never recompense me thus.
Had she, in envy of my prosp'rous fortune,—
Which on this day did always richly shoot
With new luxuriancy of fruit and blossom,—
Revil'd my life and scoff'd at my success,
I had not rued the pity that I felt.
But this accurst, destructive calumny,
Sinks to my heart like a malignant drug.
The venom that the viper Envy spits
Hath not the power to injure Virtue's ermine,
But calumny from those that we have cherish'd,
Is as a cruel and deep-searching acid,
Which takes at once something away, and leaves
An irremediable blain behind. [*Exeunt*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An ancient Apartment.*

JUDGE and MAGISTRATE.

Mag. Full nineteen years have pass'd since it was done,
And till to-day suspicion never glanc'd
On any one in all the town.——

Jud. 'Tis strange!
'Tis very strange! The man, you say, enjoys
A blameless life and honorable name.

Mag. He is, my Lord, a man of excellent worth,
A magistrate, with ev'ry virtue grac'd,
That can the magisterial state adorn.
Goodness presides with him, Wisdom directs,
And, hand in hand, Justice and Clemency

Have ever brought Content to his award.
Jud. What was his youthful character? I mean,
Did he partake the revels of the gay;
Or was he always, as you now describe,
Sedate in pleasure and in action wise?
Mag. In that my recollection does not serve;
But I have heard that some time in his youth,
As wilfulness betrays the sprightly young,
He did with wild companions waste the night,
And play'd rash pranks, as youth will ever do;
But still as oft in penitence contrite,
He like the ruing prodigal reclaim'd,
And grew in time, what he has now become,
A mirror and example to us all.
Jud. Is he religious, pious in his humor,
Or but like others, temper'd by the times?
Gives he habitual tendance on the church,
More for the usage than in holy zeal?
Mag. In charity, my Lord, how may I answer?
Who dare assign a motive to the mind,
That is not seen in the fair aim of action?
Jud. True, Sir? But that which I aspire to know,
Is all within the scope of our discernment.
I do but ask if in his piety
He moves by stated and habitual rule;
Or hath repute, as many others have,
For earnest fits of high enthusiasm,
With listless intervals of faded passion.
Mag. 'Tis said, my Lord, if true or false, I know not,
That he is prone to mystical devotion;
And certain 'tis, he oft frequents the haunts
Of those who let their wand'ring fancies range
Amidst the darkness of prophetic dreams.—
Jud. Th' accuser is the widow of the dead?
Mag. She is, my Lord.
Jud. And never once before
Made this unhappy accusation?
Mag. Never.
Jud. Nor any other at a former time?
Mag. It is to me a half-forgotten tale,
For ever since I could remember aught,
The wretched woman has been counted craz'd,

And touch'd with arrogant fanaticism.
All day she sits, muttering an uncouth plaint,
Close to the spot whereon the blood was seen,
And yearly as the fatal day returns,
Though storm and terror ride the flying air,
She, in her gown's effectless cov'ring wrapp'd,
Stands at the gate, and with a ghost-like wail,
Cries "blood has voice, and heaven heard Abel's cry."

Jud. A terrible conceit!

Mag. What shall be done?

Jud. He must be tried.

Mag. My Lord!

Jud. A charge is given.

Mag. But on conceit.—It is phantastic all.

Jud. I hope it is; still on a charge like this,
The law speaks out decidedly.

Mag. There is no evidence. So many years
Have pass'd oblivious since the deed was done,
That but for her delirious wretchedness,
All trace and circumstance had been forgotten.
'Tis sad to think that Glanville's honor'd name
Should be so sullied by a maniac's fancy.

Jud. But simple often are the oracles
Which the Great Wise doth sometimes deign to use,
And in long hidden mysteries of blood,
As dim a light has shown as dark a horror.
The trial must proceed. But first desire
The different parties to attend me here.
I would converse awhile with them apart.

SCENE II. *The gate of the town, as in the first scene of the first act.*

ISBEL and ARIETTE.

Ariet. Lo, there the haggard beldam moody sits,
Gather'd with thought, as 'twere, into a knot;
Her visage pressing on her clench'd right hand,
While with the left she draws the elbow in,
Nor rests it on her cross'd and cramped knee.
There's no remorse in that grim attitude.
But I will speak to her. How my heart fails!
She hath a look so witchlike and so wild,
That I would shun the glimpsing of her eyes

With fears I know not wherefore. Hapless wretch!
How strangely hideous, o'er that dark attire,
Her loose grey hair in snaky wreathes descends,
Veiling her breast, whose dried and wither'd lean
Contains no fostering for tender pity.

Isb. Who, or what art thou, that, so lovely pale,
Dost wear the garb and semblance of the earth,
With such a mild and heavenly gracious mien?
Draw near, sweet thing—Why dost thou shrink away?
Give me thy hand, and let me see thy face—
Ha! Glanville's daughter! Wherefore comes she here
Would'st thou entreat me? Art thou not indeed
The tempting devil, and hath ta'en the form
Of that fair maid, to mar the work of Heaven,
That I am call'd to do? away, avaunt.
Justice, Justice! Look up! Seest thou nought there?

Ariet. The sun is there.

Isb. It is the eye of God.
Would'st thou seduce me in his orbed sight?
Get thee far from me. I defy thy wiles.

Ariet. O thou most cruel, thou ill-minded woman,
Surely some demon, hatch'd by an eclipse
Of ev'ry blessing and benignant star,
Hath turn'd thy thoughts to mischief and to sin,
That thou dost think so wickedly of me.
What direful Incubus, averse to truth,
Hath gain'd possession of thy hideous self?
For madness never, in its desp'rate dreams,
Thought aught so monstrous and fantastical,
As that of which thou hast accus'd my father;
And now thou 'dst do another bolder sin,
Aghast recoiling with well-feign'd affright,
To doom me innocent to stake and flame.

Isb. What would'st thou here, if thou art as thou sayest?
Ha! thou incarnated, what would'st thou here?

Ariet. O look not on me with such eyes of dread.
Stand not avaunt, nor with such horrent stare,
Believe thou gazest on the sire of sin.
Alas, I am indeed, that Glanville's child,
Whom the foul imps, that prompt malicious thoughts
Have made thee in thine anger charge with murder.

Isb. Be she the Ill, she hath no power on me;

I am a tried and chosen instrument
To work high purposes of Providence.
As righteous Job was tried, I have been tried,
And patient all the sore probation stood.
I was a wife, a fondly cherish'd wife,
I was a mother, and my smiling babes
Hung like a garland wreathing me around:
The birds sung merrily, my heart was glad,
And glow'd to heav'n with silent thankfulness:
When suddenly in that most happy hour,
The solemn angel of destruction pass'd,
And from the winnowing of his dreadful wings
Blighting disease fell upon all my plants,
And laid them in the dust. My eyes would weep,
But the Lord gives and the Lord takes away:
I knelt and prais'd his name. Then, even then,
Did the dark Glanville strike the secret blow,
That left me here a lonely childless widow,—
But he that gives may freely take away:
Blest be his awful name. Year after year,
On this selected day, new sorrow came,
Till all forsook me, and I found myself
Brought to the last, the utmost verge of want.
Think'st thou that this was but in casualty?
And heaven was studious to assay me so,
Without some holy purpose?

Ariet. Heav'n forbid.
But why, O why dost thou so wildly think
That purpose should be to destroy my father:
A man the most unlike, yea most unfit,
To do a deed so terrible as murder?

Isb. I hold no questioning with Providence,
In whose eternal universe of things,
All ill is but th' unseemly root of good.
Yes: that which to our narrow mortal scan
Appears so shapeless, knotty, and obscene,
With writhing worms and crawling grubs astir,
Is the life's treasury of some fair tree,
Whose fragrant boughs give shade and sheltering,
Off'ring obsequiously their beauteous fruit.

Ariet. What good can spring from my dear father's woe?
Ah me, what bounty from my breaking heart?

Is he not innocent? Thou know'st he is,—
And but in anger made the accusation.
O haste, recal the ill which thou hast said.

Isb. It is a bloodhound that hath waited long
Scenting its prey, and will not be recall'd.

Ariet. What proof, what witness hast thou to adduce?

Isb. He that commission'd through the gloomy void,
The glorious angel, from whose wings of flame
Were shook the stars that light the universe,
Will send a witness to avouch the truth.
Hear me, and then away. At ev'ry crime,
Heaven hath two witnesses.

Ariet. Ah; what are they?

Isb. The injur'd and the guilty. Bloody here,
Aghast with death, and looking up to heaven,
Lay the informing witness of the crime:
The other is the murderer himself;
And he will verify the dead man's charge.
But see, they beckon me to the tribunal. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *An apartment, the same as in the first scene of the second act.*

JUDGE.

The thoughtful mind; reflecting on the past,
Sees in the various issue of events,
A latent justice working straight from Heaven.—
Whate'er affects us, sleeping or awake,
Compels some current in the sea of thought,
That moves us on to action.—By what chance
Could this mysterious supposition rise,
After the lapse of nineteen silent years?

[*Enter* ISBEL.]

Isb. Justice, my Lord. In the Almighty name
Of him that heard the blood of Abel cry,
I make the dread demand.—

Jud. Be calm, 'tis granted,
The writ is issued, and without delay
The trial shall proceed. But, Isbel, think,
There is no witness, proof, or evidence.

Isb. Ha! and has he who orders all things right,
Borne witness to me nineteen times in vain?
—The voice and testimony of mankind,

With time, and place, and circumstances clear,
Could not so prove the bloody Glanville's guilt,
As my great demonstration.
Jud. What is it?
What nineteen times of witness do you speak?
Isb. The anniversaries of that dire day
On which my husband was so foully murder'd.
Jud. Alas, poor wretch! What is that evidence?
Isb. Give me the hearing, calmly, as befits
Your high vice-gerency, and justly due
To my distress and widowhood forlorn.
I am, my Lord, an old woe-stricken hag,
Whose grey hairs flutter in the winter's wind:
And I am poor—a mendicant, my Lord,
In the obscenest rags of poverty.
Shrunk age, lean want, and slow-consuming sorrow,
Have made me all so hideous to the sight,
That the spare alms which but provoke my need,
Are less in piteous charity bestow'd,
Than in the sad surprisal to behold
A thing so miserable human still.
I have outliv'd compassion, and to fee
The advocacy that my state requires,
Have only these salt tears. But yet, my Lord,
I claim the rites due to the race of man.
The mighty maker of all things that are,
Judges, and kings, and laws, made me himself:
Yea, from as old a date as he contrived
The glory of the sun, he destin'd me,
And I demand my just equalities.
Jud. Alas, good Isbel, this is ravel'd speech.
Thou art assur'd the trial shall proceed.
Isb. Who is the judge?
Jud. I am.
Isb. My Lord!
Jud. I am!
Why shak'st thou so thy head, and wav'st thy hand?
Isb. My Lord, my Lord, deal equally with both.
This is a cause in which dread Providence
Appears a witness. If you are the judge,
Why am I question'd here,—in secret here?
Jud. She has rebuk'd me well.—You may withdraw,

Till the appointed time of trial come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Room in Glanville's house.*

ARIETTE and REGINALD.

Ariet. Alas, dear brother, you persuade in vain.
There's not a truth in holy writ more sure
Than that around us, in continual strife,
The ministers of good and ill contend.
Oft have I seen in the calm summer noon,
When silent butterflies, like silvery blossoms,
Floated in sunshine, and the golden bee
Sung as he woo'd the blooming yellow broom,
Angelic wings gleam o'er the sleeping lawn;
I too have noted at the close of day,
When the bright sun has set in amber clouds,
Tracks straightway to him, from all points of Heaven,
Of airy agents, doubtless then recall'd;
And while alone, late in my chamber, sitting,
When all was dark without, within all still,
Save that at times I heard the deathwatch tick,
I have been conscious of some evil thing
Hov'ring behind me.—Brother, Reginald—
O what may chance, if Isbel's charge be true,
And in the court a flaming witness come.

Reg. Thou can'st not, Ariette, believe it true.

Ariet. Is it not in the sacred volume told,
That Moses' visage once so brightly shone
With the reflected glory he had seen,
That none could look on him till he was veil'd;
And he was but a mortal man of clay.—
How shall we then endure the burning frown,
Of one commission'd from the heaven of heavens,
For an Apocalypse?

Reg. What dost thou mean?

Ariet. Methinks I see him!

Reg. Whom?

Ariet. He's in the midst.

Reg. Sweet Ariette, sister, hear me. O forbear,
Nor gaze with such distraction in thine eyes.

Ariet. See how around the startled crowd recoil,
With glowing faces and uplifted hands,
As if retiring from a rising flame.

Reg. There's nothing here. It is but thy conceit,
That fills with prodigies the empty air,
Come, take thy hand, sweet sister, from thine eyes,
And by their faculty aright excited,
This strange phantasma of unreal fear,
Will vanish from thy mind, as dismal shadows
Thrown in the sun's eclipse, fly at his clearing.

Ariet. O would I were a flower that weeps but dew,
Weeps without woe, and blushes without shame.

Reg. O do not raise and drop thy clasped hands,
With such a mindless gaze of deadly sorrow --
Speak to me, Ariette.—Hear me, O cease!

Ariet. What if the dead man's ghost itself appear,
And with its clotted locks and gashy head,
Glare horrible conviction?

Reg. O help! help! help!

[Enter GLANVILLE.]

Glan. What means this cry? O Ariette, my child!
My gentle Ariette—What has she heard?
Inform me, Reginald.

Ariet. Confess, confess,
And save the world from such a visitation.

Glan. Is there contagion in the maniac's madness?
What is the visitation that she dreads?

Ariet. If you are guilty, it will surely come.

Glan. Come! what will come?

Ariet. The witness.

Glan. Who?

Reg. 'Tis there -

Ariet. Where, Reginald, where, where?

Reg. O it is this,
This dread of vision, supernatural,
That scatters all her tossing thoughts adrift.

Ariet. Did you, my father, murder Isbel's husband?
Nay do not start, but answer if you did.
Far, better far, it were at once to tell,
Than dare the grim confronting of his ghost.
Confess, confess, for lo! the officers,
Come to conduct you to the fatal bar.

[Enter OFFICERS.]

Glan. Had I not lost the sense of sorrow quite,
My heart would swell, but it lies still and dead.

Take her away—and get her opiates.
[*Exit Glanville with Officers.*

Amiet. I will not go. I will attend on him—
Unhand me, Reginald, detain me not,
Though I may perish like a film in fire,
Before some gorgeous angel, bright from Heaven,
I will the fate of this probation see.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *An ancient Apartment, the same as in the first scene of the second Act.*

JUDGE and ADVOCATE.

Jud. I have convers'd with her.

Adv. Is she insane?

Jud. Her mind is heated and fanatical,
Wand'ring, but not astray.

Adv. How tend her thoughts?

Jud. Religion, justice, and enthusiasm,
So mingle and amalgamate her fancies,
That the effect is stronger on the heart,
Than eloquence with reason well compounded.

Adv. What are her nineteen signs of evidence,
That testimony borne by heaven itself?
For Glanville still hath been a man esteem'd,
Never suspected, but in all his life,
Sustain'd with constancy a blameless name.

Jud. But there are times, when the dire fiend of ill,
Obtains sad homage from the wisest men.

(Enter MAGISTRATE and GLANVILLE.)

Mag. My Lord, the Prisoner.

Jud. It wrings my heart
That one so just, so prosperous, so honor'd,
Should in the evening cool of a fair life;—
All business finish'd, and enjoyment found,
Be thus molested by so strange a charge.

Glan. Alas! my Lord, such is the fate of man!
When we have gain'd the resting time of life,
And think ourselves from accident secure,—
Save in the pastime of some evening game,

Whose sober chances suit the pulse of age,—
A daughter's frailty, or a son's dishonor;
The spite of foes, or worse, ingratitude;
Breaks on our quiet, like the whirling storm
That lifts the sheltering thatch-roof from the hind,
Quenching the desolated hearth within.
And yet prosperity hath evils too:
The constant smile of fortune on the great
Destroys the sense and faculty of joy,
Like the unclouded sunshine, that consumes
The germs of verdure from the mountain's brow,
And makes it bald and barren as the stone
That wastes beneath the fetter'd convict's tread.
They little know the wayward heart of man,
Who think enjoyment makes him loath to die.
The luscious bowl Voluptuousness prepares,
Is mingled with a fell and drowsy charm;
And Pleasure's smiling blandishments are felt
Like the caresses of a tender nurse,
That fondly lulls her weary babe to sleep.

Adv. This accusation troubles you too much.

Jud. You look on life, Sir, too despondingly.
There is no cause, I trust, for this dejection?

Glan. I cannot choose, my Lord, but to be sad.
My daughter, touch'd by this afflicting chance,
Strays in her mind, and, as a blossom blighted,
A sudden withering o'er her reason spreads.

Jud. Does she too think the accusation true?

Glan. She has been always, from her tend'rest years,
Enchanted by the spells of mystic lore,
And goblin tales, of boding apparitions;
Which in the grief of this unhallow'd day
Have rous'd her fears to dread expectancies
Of ghostly evidence and spectral proof.

Jud. And if such awful things should be—

Glan. My Lord!

Jud. All times have heard, and piety believes,
That there are agents in the world unseen,
Who by some sympathetic power extract
The deepest secrets of the closest breast.
The fiery visage and the burning heart
Of guilt conceal'd, are kindled by their touch;

And we have heard how strangers from afar,
Inform'd by spirits at the dead of night,
Have told the names of secret'st men of blood.
It is a fearful, strange coincidence,
That your fair daughter should so wildly dread,
In this terrific and mysterious cause,
The hideous proof of visionary forms.

Glan. Give you, my Lord, too, credit to the thought?—
Think you that Isbel's phantasy is true?
And must I cavil with a mad conceit,
Bred in the chaos of a maniac's brain,
Like a most strange creation?

Jud. How?

Glan. The thought
To fix on me this ignominious charge,
Hath sprung engender'd as by miracle.

Jud. Have you, at any time, unheeding heard
Her pray'r for alms, slighted her helplessness,
Or chided at her importunity?

Glan. Never, never! This gentleman can witness,
That, more than all the general town beside,
Has been, my constant and unwearied kindness.

Mag. Nature, my Lord, in this has gone awry,
And by a wonderful and dire perversion,
Turn'd all the wonted sweet of gratitude,
Into most bitter and injurious wrong.

Glan. As stated as the dismal day return'd
It still has been my custom to bestow,
How ill-requited! on the poor insane
Some gift of pity and of charity.

Jud. Why kept you the remembrance of that day?

Glan. My Lord! I had no cause, but my compassion

Jud. Doubtless you knew the widow's husband well.

Glan. I did, my Lord, a man of honest worth,
But somewhat churlish in his speech, and prone
To swell to insolence in argument.

Jud. A man like many that we all have met,
Whom one might fall in sudden quarrel with?

Glan. He was indeed, my Lord.

Jud. Do you remember
His figure, and the manner of his garb?

Glan. To every point of the last suit he wore.

[*The Judge motions Glanville to retire.*]

Jud. Has the accuser come?

Mag. Not yet, my Lord.

Jud. [*apart*] It is a case that doth perplex me much.
Why should he hold this faithful memory?
All others, save the miserable widow,
Have almost lost remembrance of the fact,
But he retains the image of the man
Fresh and unfaded!—

[Enter ISBEL.]

Mag. Isbel comes, my Lord.

Isb. Justice, my Lord! I will not be seduc'd:
Tremendous and almighty Providence
Makes me in this an honor'd instrument,
And dare I falter in my awful function?
Methinks I see God's bright and lidless eye
Beaming intensely on us where we stand.
Justice, my Lord, I dare but ask for Justice.

Jud. Patience, good Isbel, moderate thy thoughts.
I do entreat thee but one word apart.
Do you, distinctly, in all points of dress,
Retain remembrance of your murder'd husband?

Isb. Alas! my Lord, he ever stands before me.
I see him now as he went forth to walk
On that dire morning when his life was ta'en,
—His plumed cap is gaily worn askance,
His coal-black hair, in affluent descent,
Flows o'er his purple cloak.—A primer man,
With frank and ruddy honesty of face,
Treads not the carpets of the regal dome.

Jud. His hair was black?

Isb. Yes, like the winter's cloud
That rests upon a mountain, white with snow.

Jud. His cap, you say, he gaily wore askance?

Isb. With a free boldness, not in vanity.

Jud. His cloak was purple?

Isb. Why is it, my Lord,
That thus with trifles so impertinent,
You sting my heart to the full sense of suffering?
Ascend your seat and call me to accuse.

Jud. 'Tis well. Come, gentlemen, let's to the hall.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. *A room in Glanville's house.*

REGINALD and ARIETTE.

Reg. Refrain, dear sister, from this eager suit;
A few short minutes, and all will be done.
Rest where you are, and when the trial ends,
I will a speedy messenger dispatch,
To bless you with the tidings of acquittal.

Ariet. I will not stay,—I cannot rest behind.
I burn impatient to behold the scene;
And if I see it not, my fearful heart
Will surely flutter from its mansion here.

Reg. Alas! dear Ariette, so wildly wan
You will but there the gazing crowd surprise.
O try your native meekness to renew,
Be in our father's virtue confident,
Nor fear of prodigy will then alarm.

Ariet. I can but only think of what may come,
And the pent spirit in my heart dilating,
Feels clung by agony, while we stay here.
Haste, brother, haste.—Let us together go.
Why thus detain me by the wrist so firm?
O, Reginald, thou false unfilial son,
Wilt thou stay here while thy dear father stands,
Upon the edge, the pinnacle of shame?
All eyes that see him, look expecting thee.
I am his daughter, and I will go there.
The laws of man may other ties divide,
But cannot part the chain of destiny,
Which links the parent and the child for ever.
I tell thee, Reginald, that I will go.
Take off thy hands. Release me. Why is this?
You think me mad, your eyes betray you do.
Injurious thought, when I can be so calm.
Nay, I will promise not to think of it.—
No witness apparitional will come,
They that expect such sights amaze themselves
With conjurations of their own conceit.
Come, brother, come. Ah me! why do you weep?
Believ'st thou that our father did the deed,
And that some hideous evidence will come?
O Reginald!—But let me dry these tears,

Which so unseemly stand upon thy cheek?
Sweet brother, do!—Hence!—
Reg. Stay, unhappy, stay.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Hall of Justice.*

The JUDGE, MAGISTRATE, ADVOCATE, GLANVILLE, ISBEL, and SPECTATORS.

Jud. With calmness now set forth the accusation.
Isb. Nineteen long years ago, and on this day—
The very birth and change-day of the moon,
A day on which, as you came here to-day,
The King's Justiciary open'd the assize;—
That hollow man of undiscover'd crimes
Did, with an impious and destructive hand,
Make me a widow, ruin'd all my life,
Pluck'd every pleasure of the earth away,
And left me withering, shelterless, and wild,
As the bare tree which heaven's afflicting flash
Has made so hideous and fantastical,
That twilight travellers, as they pass it by,
Are seiz'd with fear, and think unhallow'd things.
Jud. What proof, what witnesses support this charge?
Isb. Proofs sent from heaven, and Providence itself.
Every sad morning since the deed was done
I've ta'en my seat near where the trodden grass
With crimson blush reveal'd the secret sin;
And annual as the dismal day came round,
That pensive man, in seeming kind concern
Did visit me, and minister'd soft words,
With frequent gifts, my sorrow to appease.
Why is't, my Lord, that he was thus so kind,
So punctual in his pity?
Jud. To the point.
Isb. And ever still, as regularly true
As the great sun adorn'd that morning's sky,
His life was mark'd by some high-priz'd advantage,
Some valued fruitage of prosperity.
But yet, while all his house resounded joy,
Still would he from the festal throng retire,
And come in contrite charity to me.
Was it not strange that he did so, my Lord?

Jud. Be circumstantial.
Adv. Is this evidence?
Isb. And still as often as his fortune florish'd,
Some new deficiency in life I found.
Adv. Alas! my Lord, how she perverts the signs
That Heaven itself gives of his innocence.
Jud. She builds her accusation on the proof
Of providential circumstance, and he
Must meet the charge by similar appeal.
Adv. It is insane conceit.
Jud. Let her proceed.
Isb. Yes, the just Heavens by order'd circumstance,
Since human demonstration there was none,
Have turn'd the issue of his fortune still,
To draw all eyes to this mysterious day—
Once on the anniversary of guilt,
That fatal day, a son was born to him,
Yet while the mother weak in anguish lay,
He left her, babe, and garr'lous gossips all,
Rememb'ring the the wretch he made forlorn.
Another time, a kinsman proudly rich,
Whose haughty and unrecognizing eye
Had never glanc'd on him or his, deceas'd,
And made him heir to treasures passing name.
Again upon that day, sequence to wealth,
Came great emblazon'd honors from the King.—
Each chance of prosp'rous fortune that he found,
Still on that day befel.
Jud. Then wherefore, Isbel,
Did you not sooner make this solemn charge?
Isb. In that, my lord, behold how Providence
Doth work its purpose to the destin'd end.
Still though by custom I was wont to look
With thankful expectation for his coming,
No thought of wrong, not one suspicious thought,
Arose within me till this day of justice.
As I was sitting at the city gate,
When he, with all the honor'd of the town,
Came forth, as ancient custom did require,
To bring you, as the king's vicegerent, in:—
This day, the only day he e'er neglected
To bring his customary gift and pity;—

I, wond'ring at his absence, as he came
And greeted you with courteous salutation,
Regarded him I know not how, reproachful,
At which methought pale terror blanch'd his face:
He look'd at me, and then anon at you,
And dread and trouble thicken'd in his eye;—
Then did the proof of all that I have told,
The nineteen annual visits, each success
That crown'd his fortune and made fair his lot,
Rise like the first creation of the light,
Surprising me with most entire conviction.

Adv. Surely, my lord, this is but as a dream,
The idle vapor of a brain diseas'd.
We but offend the gravity of justice
In giving 'tendance to a tale like this.

[Enter Ariette and Reginald, *and remain on one side.*]

Ariet. All is yet well, and nothing yet hath come.
But wherefore is this pause? why do they wait?
Do they expect?——Ah, what do they expect?

Reg. Hush, sister, hush: let us stand back. Apart;
See, the judge rises; do not so obtrude.

Jud. The proof, so far, by the accuser given,
Is not sufficient.

Adv. Proof, my lord! what proof?
Witness or evidence there has been none;
Therefore I claim the prisoner's acquittal.

Jud. But he is tried upon the ancient law,
And may not claim release till he has pass'd
The solemn ordeal therein prescribed.

Glan. What is it, sir?

Adv. Stand forth, and face the judge.

Reg. My dearest Ariette, in mercy rest;
Press not so eagerly, nor look so wild.

Jud. The charge against you, Glanville, you have heard
'Tis built on circumstances so obscure,
That, but for old traditionary wont,
I should pronounce you free to leave the bar;
But this the charter of the town forbids,
Till you have here, in open court, requir'd
High Heaven to verify the accusation,
Or scaithless suffer you to quit the hall.

Say will you make this terrible appeal?

Glan. If 'tis so ordered, I must submit.

Jud. Kneel.

Glan. Must I kneel?

Isb. How pale he looks!

Glan. What more?

Jud. Make the demand?

Ariet. No, father, father, no!

Glan. Alas, my child!

Jud. Remove that gentle maid.

Sir, we attend. Will you make the appeal?

Adv. How full of horror is this solemn pause!

Glen. If Heaven accuses me before this court,

Send forth its witness, or let me retire.

Adv. No witness comes.

Jud. Who then is that?

Ariet. Who? where?

Jud. Stand back, divide, and give him room to enter.

Adv. Who is't, my lord? who? where? what witness? which?

Jud. Yon black-hair'd man, who wears his plumed cap

On his left temple. Give him room to come.

Adv. I am amaz'd, my lord; I see none such.

Jud. Him in the purple cloak, yon ruddy man.

Isb. It is, it is my husband that appears!

Glan. O God! O God! and doth his ghost arrive?

Reg. My sister, O my sister!

Adv. She is dead!

The vital chord, with dreadful expectation

Strain'd beyond suff'ring, suddenly hath snapp'd.

Glan. My long deep-hidden misery of heart

Is by the heralding of Heaven proclaim'd

In this stern visitation. O my child,

My gentle, innocent, sweet Ariette!

But thou art blest; why should I mourn for thee?

You, dearest Reginald, my blazon'd shame

Will, like the taint of an infectious pest,

From all esteem'd society exclude;

Yet wilt thou never, if preserv'd from guilt

In that exclusion, half the anguish suffer

Which, ever torturing, gnaw'd thy father's heart:

For let polemics to the end debate,

When bliss or punishment results to man,
Though safe from human law, the guilty feel
With the first crime the pains of hell begin.
Pronounce the sentence, I await my doom.

THE END.

Remarks on The Witness.

We are not acquainted with any drama in the English language which resembles this piece; as far indeed as our knowledge extends, it is entitled to be regarded as an original composition. Yet the characters are not out of the course of nature, and the incidents, though possessing a deep superstitious interest, are in themselves so very simple, that they can scarcely be considered as inventions. It is the author's coloring which bestows on them all their peculiar dignity.

The subject in itself seems almost incapable of dramatic situations. A man has been many years ago murdered by some unknown assassin. The occurrence is forgotten by every one except his widow and a gentleman of a most estimable character, who has compassionately assisted the poor woman from the period of her husband's death. In the course of the play, the widow, in a fit of momentary disappointment, accuses her benefactor of the murder, and, by a singular train of metaphysical reflections, the judge is led to suspect that the gentleman actually did commit the crime, and in consequence so works upon his imagination as to obtain a confession of the fact. How far the author has succeeded in managing with due effect this delicate attempt, the reader's feelings alone can properly appreciate. The design has at least the merit of novelty.

The author has omitted to mention in what country the scene is laid, and the reader is left at a loss to understand whether the place is a real town or, as well as the circumstances, fictitious. We are of opinion that the whole is an invention, contrived to afford opportunities for unfolding an universal principle in the human mind, and that the subject has no local reference, but is applicable to the process of every man's reflection and associations. In this respect, the play may be regarded as a philosophical essay.

Besides that of the main story, a minor interest is created by a developement of the passion of fear on the cha-

racter of Ariette. The passions, without doubt, take their complexion from constitutional peculiarities. The character of Ariette, though in unison with the tone of the composition, is, we apprehend, of too rare a kind to excite general sympathy. There is a degree of tenderness, a fragility of reason about her, beyond even what the general opinion of the world ascribes to the excess of sensibility in romantic girls. We are not sure that the author has failed in his delineation; but it will not be denied that he has painted a *being* that seems to be more for ornament than use in this world. She however serves to augment the interest of his drama.

The character of Isbel is not only the most prominent in the piece, but, as a dramatic portrait, we think, unique. She is a mixture of religious confidence, insane enthusiasm, correct feeling, erroneous judgment, and acute observation, with a disposition to draw fanciful inferences; the effect of these contrarieties in combination is, at once, wildly impassioned and affectingly simple. Without such a character, the play would probably have been tedious; and yet the catastrophe depends less on her than on the Judge, who is represented as a calm, dignified personage, distinguished by a sedate sagacity more than by any of those emphatic qualities which are supposed to be indispensable to proper dramatic characters.

We remember some years ago to have read in a publication, called "The Phantasmagoria," a story which bore some resemblance to the catastrophe of "The Witness." A person who had been accused of murder, being placed at the bar, appeared to be suddenly and strangely agitated, and inquired of the judge if a man could give evidence in his own cause. The judge, suspecting from the tremor with which the man looked towards the witnesses' box, then empty, that he was under some superstitious terror, answered that it depended on the circumstance, and certainly in the present case he might. "Then," exclaimed the culprit, "I am lost, for I see the man I murdered in the witnesses' box."

A story mentioned by Barnes, in his History of Edward III., has been pointed out to us as probably the source from which the author was led to imagine the character of Ariette; and we think that the incidental circumstance

alluded to in the second scene of the first act, was probably derived from Barnes, or some ballad founded on the story which he relates. "It is reported," says he, "that a young woman named Joan, living in the parish of Kingsly, in the diocese of Winchester, and the deaconage of Aulton, being on the fourth of June at night, advised by a voice to go and meet her sweetheart William in the forest of Wolmar aforesaid, early in the morning met with an Incubus in his shape. At her return home she fell into a grievous malady, and then, upon conference with her sweetheart William, it appeared that she had been seduced to her confusion by an evil spirit."

THE WATCH-HOUSE,

A Farce,

IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

PAUKIE M'LUCAR, Constable of the Night.
DOCTOR NODDLE, Guardian to Miss Fond.
CAPTAIN DASH, in love with Miss Fond.
SLY, his Servant.
GEORGE KING
LUNY O'ROGHERTY.
JOHN AP JONES.
DONALD M'DONALD.
First Gentleman.
Second Gentleman.
Third Gentleman.

MISS TABBY DRAGON, Aunt to Miss Fond, and Cousin to Doctor Noddle.
PERT, Miss Fond's Servant.
MISS FOND.

Prisoners, male and female

THE WATCH-HOUSE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Street.*

SLY *and* PERT.

Sly. Then at what hour shall I have the chaise ready?

Pert. Not sooner than eleven—Miss Fond must have some cloaths with her, which cannot be packed up till after her aunt has gone to bed. You would not have her run away in her shift.

Sly. Why not? I'm sure she would be as welcome in that state as in any other; and if she did not expect to be so, neither you nor I, Mrs. Pert, would have so much trouble contriving the elopement.

Pert. Well, poor soul, if I were so smitten as she is, and held in *(Miss Tabby appears at a window)* by an ugly old cat of an aunt, and a stupid, senseless philosopher of a guardian—

Sly. You would run away too, I suppose.

Pert. That's what I would.

Tabby. What can all this mean? Only three days in London, and already making free with her virtue.

Sly. Well, you and I, you know, are to be married, whenever my master has got hold of your mistress.

Pert. Indeed!

Tabby. Oh, is it so? Here's a conspiracy with a witness; a plot, a gunpowder plot!

Sly. But I must be going. I have a great deal to do to-night; at eleven the chaise shall be waiting, and be you and Miss Fond ready to jump.

Pert. Never doubt us.

Sly. But what shall be the signal?

Tabby. Aye, let me hear the signal?

Pert. Just after the watchman calls the hour, pass you along, whistling.

Tabby. Whistling; I'll remember that.

Pert. And with your stick rattle on the railing.

Sly. I understand, whistling, and with my stick along the railing, so—

Tabby. How lucky it was that I came to the window!

Sly. Till then, adieu.

Pert. Adieu.

Sly. I say, I say. *(kisses her.)*

Pert. Fie! *(gives him a box on the ear.)* [*Exeunt.*

Tabby. (*sola at the window.*) Here's a pretty piece of work: the fellow is no other than the servant of Captain Dash, who has so often attempted to run away with my niece; but he shall be again prevented: I will spoil this stratagem; he shall know what it is to contend with a woman of my discernment. But hold: let me restrain myself; let me be cool, that I may the better anticipate this matrimonial machination. How unfortunate it is that I have nobody to consult but my cousin, Doctor Timothy Noddle, and he is so taken up with philosophical utility, as to be almost useless. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The Interior of a Watch-house.*

PAUKIE M'LUCAR, the Constable of the Night, and Watchmen.

Pau. Honest men, I see ye're a' here, but it's as weel to be regular. Answer to your names. Ye maun think that I am acquaint with my duty. Be a' ready—

Watchmen. We are.

Pau. Bide a wee till I get on my specs; (*he puts on his spectacles,*) now (*reads*) "George King."

1 *Watch.* Here.

Pau. Tak care, Geordie, and acquit yoursel in a kingly manner, and be worthy of your name; no like the new-fangled clanjamfry, that the French mak for folks that hae auld anes mickle better o' their ain. (*reads.*) "Luny O'Rogherty."

2 *Watch.* Please your vorship, here.

Pau. Now, Luny, dinna be kicking up a row wi' every body you meet; consider you're no among the wild Irish here in Lonon, but in a sober, Christian land, where it's your duty to keep the peace.

2 *Watch.* I know as well as your honor that I am in the land of liberty, where a man can't take a bit of fun without being sent to jail for't.

Pau. What do you ca' fun? is't broken snouts, and crackit crowns? That may be fun amang the Paddies, but it's no for the civilized capital. See that ye behave yoursel, Luny. (*reads*) "John ap Jones."

3 *Watch.* Here.

Pau. Ye're a Welshman, and nae doubt as het in the temper as a pepper-box; but ca' cannie, and be civil. The Welsh are creditable bodies, and I se warrant ye're ne without discretion. (*reads*) "Donald M'Donald."

4 *Watch.* Here.

Pau. Ay, Donald, what brought you here?

4 *Watch.* My ain twa legs.

Pau. Weel jeestit, Donald, ye would na gang far afield without them. What part o' the kintra cam ye frae?

4 *Watch.* The parish o' Moydart, in Lochaber.

Pau. Ye're farther north than my parentage. Was Flora M'Donald sib to you, she that gaed o'er the water wi' Charlie? Troth, she was a credit to your clan. I hae a warm side to the M'Donalds mysel, for my father's auntie by the mither's blood had a dochter married to Duncan Campbell, auld ferry-boat, whose mither was a M'Donald. This Duncan Campbell's father was na without repute in his day. He was third piper to the great John, Duke of Argyle, that has the marble head-stane wi' the images on't i' the hee kirk o' Wastminster, forenent the House o' Parliament. So you see I count kindred baith wi' the Campbells and the M'Donalds. Hae, pree my mull, (*offers his snuff-box*) and the first time ye're in my house, I'll gee you a caulker o' ferentosh for a' lang syne.

4 *Watch.* Oh, sir, clanship's out o' fashion, or ye would na see a M'Donald keeping the ill-doers o' Lonon in gude order.

Pau. Very true. Our gentry are sarely fa'n aff, or they would na snoke about the court, licken the doups o' the cabinet ministers, when they might live respected in their ain castles, like wee emperors. But, Donald, it was na for bigging of kirks ye left Scotland, more than ither folks.

4*th Watch.* It was for fear o' the kirk, tho' Sir.

Pau. What, got ye a lass wi bairn? There're no sae nice about that here, if ye can pay for't; but, Donald, consider ye're in a foreign land, and are, as it were, a part of the representation of Scotland. Keep up the character of your country, let nae' man insult it with impunity, for tho' he hae' been obliged to flee't, the shames a' your,

ain, and the very cause of your moonlight flitting, does credit to the land of your kindred, *(a clock strikes.)* Sirs, its time ye were at your posts. I intended, as this is the first night of taking my place among you, to have said twa or three words of edication. Ye'll gang your rounds discreetly, and no roar the hours sae' loud as some of ye' do, disturbing the neighbourhood; (Luny, your voice is weel kent,) if ye look glegly after thieves and randies, folk can put up wi' the want of being wakened, when it's only to tell them it's past three o'clock, a cloudy morning, or sic like. It's very probable ye'll fall in wi' ne'er-do-well gentlemen frae taverns; tak care and no be o'er proud to them: when the're condemacious bring them here, but if they only gie you a clink on the side of the head, ye may let them pass for half a crown; but wherever ye fa' in wi' drunken poor folk, gie them nae mercy; they can ill afford to ape the misdemeanors of their betters: what they waste in drink, their families maun want in meat I could say mickle mair, but I have na time, and ye mun just be thankfu' for what ye hae' gotten. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Study.*

DOCTOR NODDLE.

If the rage of improvement continues at this rate, we shall neither have space to grow corn, nor room to build houses. The whole country will be occupied with pleasure-grounds, turnpike-roads, railways, canals, wet-docks, race-courses, squares, crescents, and wide streets; if it were not for the occasional blessings of wars, mankind would be obliged to live on each other.

[Enter TABBY.]

Tabby. Cousin Noddle, Cousin Noddle! What do you think?

Doct. I think that the country will be ruined by improvements.

Tabby. Nonsense, nonsense, Doctor. I am surprised, that seeing my agitation, you can be such a sot to philosophy, as to talk of improvements.

Doct. O, Tabby Dragon, there is no sentiment of universal philanthropy in thy bosom. Thou art wrapt up in thyself, Tabby; if thou could'st but know the sublime

ideas of the utilitarian philosophy, thou wouldst despise those propensities, which make thee grovel like a ——

Tabby. Will you not hear me?

Doct. If it be any petty personal consideration, Tabby Dragon, thou dost intrude.

Tabby. Are you, or are you not, the guardian of my niece? she's going to be ravished.

Doct. The case will be a plea of the crown; we, individuals, have nothing to do with it, unless we happen to be witnesses.

Tabby. Surely, surely, you were never created to be of any use; if it were not for me, the poor girl might be undone before your face. Captain Dash has arranged all for carrying her off this very night; the time is set, signals are concerted, a chaise is provided; I have overheard the whole plot between her maid Pert, and his servant Sly.

Doct. Then you were witness to a criminal conversation.

Tabby. If we do not prevent it, nothing less than marriage and consummation, will be the consequences of the elopement.

Doct. I am amazed, and beginning to be confounded.

Tabby. Indeed, it is no wonder.

Doct. What can people have to do, marrying in these times!

Tabby. Doctor! Doctor!

Doct. Well.

Tabby. What are we to do? What are we to do?

Doct. Frustrate the perpetration; philosophy and humanity inspire me. Where is my cane? where is my hat? where are my slippers? what a pity it is that nature did not make mankind with hoofs, for emergencies like these midnight alarms.

Tabby. Merciful me, where are you going?

Doct. To the constituted authorities.

Tabby. Sit down, Timothy Noddle, let us understand each other first.

Doct. Tabby Dragon, if thou hast not understanding to foreknow the consequences, I am not surprised that thou shouldst talk of sitting down—

Tabby. Need I be told that an elopement is disgraceful to any woman, and without your consent my niece cannot marry, while she is under age. Why can't you give

your consent, and relieve me from the anxiety of continually watching. Captain Dash is of a respectable family, but by your nonsensical philosophy, the poor girl runs the risk of staining her reputation for life—

Doct. I have a philosophical motive for preventing the marriage. I have an experiment to perform on her myself.

Tabby. In the meantime let us try to prevent the elopement. If I might trust you, and you would promise not to philosophise on the subject, we certainly might avert the impending mischief.—Suppose you were to keep watch in the street till the Captain and his familiar arrive, for that servant of his is little better than a devil. I could keep a vigilant outlook from my window, give the alarm, and you could then charge them to the watch, till they find security for their future good behaviour.

Doct. Thou hast most excellent devices, Tabby; there is nobody comparable to a woman in love affairs. What is the cause of this superiority of the inferior sex? I don't know.

SCENE IV. *A Street.*

CAPTAIN DASH and SLY.

Sly. Keep back a little, Sir; let me reconnoitre; the door opens; old Philosopherum himself! Step you aside. Where can he be going? While he walks up and down in front of the door, I'll draw him off, and engage him in conversation; you will give the signal, and if all's well within, we cannot fail. (*The Captain steps aside, and Sly gazes up, as it were, to the skies.*) Hem, Hem, it should be there, these are the three stars, and yet I can't see it. (*He continues gazing up and walking backwards, till he stumbles against the Doctor.*) My dear Sir, I beg your pardon, I was so intently looking for the comet——

Doct. A comet; is there a comet to be seen?

Sly. O yes, with a long tail; we had an extraordinary gazette for it this evening; and it should be seen between the constellations Ramahdroug, and the great Mogul, just on the nail of the little toe of the Cham of Tartary.

Doct. Ramahdroug, and the———, I never heard of such constellations.

Sly. O, you're of the old school, don't you know that the German Universities have been playing the devil with

the stars—only step to the corner, and I will point out to you at least half a dozen of the new celestial dynasties.

Doct. You are very obliging, Sir, but I———pardon me, dear Sir, I'm engaged.

Sly. I thought from your appearance, and walking here by yourself, that you had been a meditating lover of science; but, perhaps, you are only a sighing lover; I am sorry to have intruded: we, men of philosophical research, think all others like ourselves.

Doct. You mistake, I have long been enamoured of science; I live but for science, nothing would give me more pleasure than to have the revolutionized celestials explained to me, by a man of your profound knowledge.

Sly. Sir, you flatter. How cloudy it seems to grow! I shall be terribly disappointed, if I see not the comet to night; I have a paper of its course, almost ready for the press; and only wanted one observation more.—Is not that the comet?

Doct. Lord bless you, Sir, that's the planet Jupiter.

Sly. You mistake me, I know Jupiter as well as I do my mas——I mean that——you know that——that star there, just by the stack of chimnies.

Doct. I see none, visible.

Sly. Not where you stand, a little more this way. It must be the comet, I think.

Doct. There is no comet there.

Sly. My dear Sir, you are looking the wrong way.

Doct. Am I?

Sly. Come forward, come forward, *(aside to the Captain.)* [*The Captain comes forward, and Sly pretends to see the comet, as the signal is made.*] O there it is, there it is, with a tail more than three yards long; don't you see it—don't you see it—just in the very place I wished. How bright it is! look with what speed it moves. Since last night it has passed the Horizon; declined to the Zenith, crossed the Line, eclipsed the Hemisphere, been in conjunction with the Zodiac, dipt into the Archipelago, fired the Hellespont, been habeas corpus in Nisi Prius, paralised the great Bear, and illuminated the Pharmacopia, and is now as steady as the Pole. *(During this rhapsody, Miss Fond, and Pert with a bundle, come out to the Captain, Tabby appears at the window.)*

Tabby. Thieves! thieves! murder! murder! help! help!

Doct. O Lord, they are off. [*The Doctor runs to catch them, Sly snatches the bundle from Pert, pushes it into the Doctor's arms, and calls out also thieves! Watchmen within spring their rattles. Tabby rushes from the house, Sly runs in and shuts the door, Watchmen, enter from all quarters. Sly appears at the open window, with a candle in one hand, and brandishing any convenient ludicrous utensil in the other, crying.*]

Sly. Seize them, seize them, the old jade is his accomplice; they have plate and linen, they have plate and linen—to the watch-house—to the watch-house with them.

Tabby. Villains! Villains!

Doct. What is the meaning of all this! What bundle is this? How came it here?

Tabby. Bundle! O, O, O.

Sly. Take them instantly into custody: my master is from home; I cannot leave the house in his absence; whenever he returns he will identify his property, and bring the delinquents to condign punishment. Away with them.

Doct. O Tabby Dragon, Tabby Dragon, O.

Tabby. What! a woman of my character, to be dragged to the watch-house; unhand me.

Sly. Off with her, off with her—Off she goes. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Watch-house.*

PAUKIE M'LUCAR, *at a Table,* TABBY, *seated at one side of the Stage, and the* DOCTOR *at the other.*

Pau. A' this, Sirs, may be very true, but ye'll allow, Madam, that it's my duty, to probe baithe you and your colleague, anent the aforesaid robbery. I have na the power to pronounce an interlocutor. My report man gang to my betters for a revisidendo—its no because I could na do ye justice, for ye're neither kith nor kin to me, but because it's a case that man gang before the Lords—and I mun show mysel acquaint wi' my duty. So ye'll baith stand up.

They stand up.

Tabby. Surely, Sir, you do not suppose us guilty of robbery. Sir, it was at our own house, I beg, Sir,——

Doct. O, conscript father; consider the baseness of calumny, the value of a name.

Pau. Ye're owr soon, man, wi' your last speech; wait till y're condemned, and then, ye'll be allowed to make it. Answer to your charge, now.

Doct. O, Tabby Dragon.

Pau. What's your name and sirname—thief?

Doct. Thief! alas, Timothy Noddle, Doctor of Laws!

Pau. Na, Na, ye'll no fling stour in my ein. Ye may be a cheating quack doctor, but ye'll no quack me, man [*Writes*] "Timothy Noddle," what's your profession?

Doct. I am a philosopher.

Pau. Heh man! that is a poor trade.

Tabby. Perhaps he may let us free, if I give him my purse. [*Aside.*

Pau. Now madam, what's your name?

Tabby Tabitha Dragon.

Pau. Are ye no affronted, Tabitha, wi' yoursel; at your time o' life, wi' ae foot in the grave, and the ither fast following, to be sic a hardened neer-do-weel. I suppose I maun put you down "spinster," 'an ye had been at your wheel, ye wadna' been here. [*Writes*] "Tabitha Dragon, spinster."

Tabby. Believe me, Sir, there is some dreadful mistake or trick in all this. What are you thinking about, cousin Timothy, that you do not try to explain this accident?

Doct. Explain this, explain! Tabby Dragon?

Tabby. O! was ever poor woman so used! I shall be driven distracted by your stupidity.

Pau. Be quiet, madam, ye mu'na gang wud here, the poor man's in evident contrition. Come, come, Timothy, turn King's evidence, and save yoursel. This is but a littleworth loon that ye hae' drawn up with. Mak confession, Timothy, that's a gude lad, mak confession, and I'll write it down. [*Prepares to write.*

Tabby. Nothing will do but the money. [*Aside.*

Pau. Weel, Timothy, what were ye going to say?

Doct. Sir, this is the most inexplicable mystery, the Eleusinian mysteries, nor all the mysteries of nature, cannot be compared to it—that I a thief, whose only robberies have been the midnight sleep—

Pau. It's all over wi' you, madam, ye're a gone dick, ye hear he's confessing.

Doct. Whose only robberies have been from the midnight sleep, for Science and Knowledge.

Pau. Science and knowledge—what's he after now? Tut man, dinna plague us wi' sic clishmaclavers.

Tabby. You see, Sir, he's a simple plain philosopher; you may rely on it we are the victims of the design to carry off my niece, of which I have told you. I beg, you will let us go home. How shocking it is for a woman of my reputation to be in a watch-house!

Pau. Na, na, madam, none of your wheedling, tho' ye were as mim's a May puddock, and as fair as Diana, ye'll no beguil me.

Tabby. There is my purse, Sir, I am sorry I have no more about me, and the Doctor never carries any money, take it and let us depart. [*Paukie M^c Lucar rises.*

Pau. I see ye ken your calling. It's no amiss to cast a bane to the dog's teeth, but 'am a sworn man, madam, and to offer me a bribe, is an even down insult——there was naithing to hae hindred you frae making me a compliment to get my good will, but to mak' a bargain, is bare naked corruption. Ye might hae' wager'd wi' me, about something ye were sure I should win, (I dinna mean to hint that ye may do this yet) and ye could have payed your debt of honor, and I could have ta'en payment wi' honor; or ye might have said that for my civility, ye would send me a suit of new clothes, like a turtle to a great man, or as the Dey of Algier's sends whelp lions to the king, in a genteel respectful manner; but this way of making a friend in the court, is no a hair better than unlawful bribery and corruption.

Doct. O Sir! this public virtue does you immortal honor: it is worthy of Cato.

Pau. Thanks to you, Doctor; when a man is sworn, he would be a rotten unprincipled tinkler, if he were to

tak a bribe; but when he's no sworn, there can be nae briberv. Doctor, ye dinna know wha I am?

Doct. Are not you the constable of the night?

Pau. Hoot, man, it was na that I meant; I mean ye re no acquaint wi' my history

Doct. O, Sir, are you an author? Historians, Sir, are the preservers of truth.

Pau. The fellow's daft: ye're daft, man. Ye should know, Madam and Sir, that my name is Paukie Maclucar I was dean of Guild, in the burgh of Bidenough. There cam down frae London, some years by gane, a weel farr'd gentleman, to be a candidate for parliament; but we had three on the leet before him. Howsomever, as the Lononer bought my wife a bra' silk gown, and gied my dochters pim cods, that were na made wi' o', I could na but be discreet to him; and to mak a long tale short, wi' my help, the Lononer won the day, in spite of a' the talents of the town.

Doct. He won the day!

Pau. Madam and Sir, ye may be sure he was pleased; and he invited me, if ever I came to London, to mak his house my hame.

Doct. Wonderful!

Pau. And it sae happened, that I thought he might help me to a post in the government; so up to Lonon I cam I was na lang of finding out his house, but was told he was na at hame. I knew the meaning of not at hame in Lonon, so I sat down on a stool in the hall. Lads, quo' I to the flunkies, I'll bide here till your master be at hame. They soon saw that Paukie Maclucar was owr far north for them; and sure enough I was told it was a neglect, for his honor was at hame. They took up my name to him, and I followed after. I was very graciously received, very graciously indeed; and no being blate to tell my errand, My dear dean of Guild, quoth my honorable friend, you shall have a tide-waiter's place to-morrow. Madam, 'am no blind, I could see, that his ain ends served, he wantit to be quat o' me; but I was made a tide-waiter, a poor hungry place; and its no to be wonder'd sic officers worry the merchants for fees. The very day I was appointed, in cam fleets of East and West Indiamen; tide-waiters were scant; so that before I was

sworn in, the board of customs sent me down to a ship from the coasts of Coromandal. I had na been lang on board, till the captain saw I was a green horn; so he invited me to take a dram of wine wi' him, in his cabin. It was very kind o' the man. As we were drinking, what would ye take, quo' he, to shut your eyes for an hour? What will ye gie, quo' I? Fifty guineas, says he. Thinks I to mysel, surely my een are pearls or diamonds that he wants to buy for the East India Company. I then said, Captain, what will ye gie me for winkin twa hours? Double the sum. Ha, ha, this is pash mending, I thought. But what will ye give Captain, if I gang away a' the gither? A thousand pounds. A bargain be it, quo' I; it doesna rain thousands o' pounds every day. In short, Madam and Sir, I got a note of han' of the late Abram Newland, for the sum, and I packit up my ends and my awls and cam off. I was na lang at hame till I got a summons to appear before the board of commissioners. What's your pleasure, Honourable Sirs, said I, when I cam before them. They a' barkit at me, like sae many rabiators, and said they would send me to Newgate. Cry a' at once, quo' I, but I'll no gang. So, after nae little argoling and bargoling, they said, as I was na sworn, they could do naething to me, and I made my bow, and cam off; but 'am a sworn man now, Madam and Sir, and dinna think that Paukie Maclucar is either magistrate of a rotten brugh or a revenue officer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Street.*

Enter SLY, *and from the opposite side* CAPTAIN DASH, *both in a hurry, and run against each other.*

Sly. O, Sir, is it you?

Dash. Damn the fellow is it you? Where is the chaise?

Sly. Where is my lady—that is to be?

Dash. What have you been about, blockhead, to leave us in the street so long?

Sly. About, Sir! I've been charging two house-breakers to the watch.

Dash. What the devil had you to do with them? I have a great mind to break your head, rascal.

Sly. You have almost done it already.

Dash. What do you say? What have you been doing?

Sly. Only sending Miss Tabby and the Doctor to the watch-house.

Dash. How!

Sly. As the old mouser cried thieves and murder from the window, I snatched the bundle from Pert, placed it in the hands of the Doctor, and then bawled out thieves, and murder also. Out came Tabby from the street door, with all her geer flying like streamers in the wind. The watch coming up; in bolted I into the house; shut the door; ran up stairs; seized the first weapon I could find; bellowed from the window; accused Miss Tabby and the Doctor of robbing the house, and ordered the watch to take them both into custody, till I could inform my master.

Dash. Dexterous impudence!

Sly. But what have you done with Miss Fond and Pert?

Dash. I left them in the square, while I went in search of you and the carriage. Come, they will be surprised at my absence. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Square. Night.*

MISS FOND and PERT.

Miss Fond. What if any rude fellow should attack us before the Captain returns.

Pert. We shall be taken for girls of the town, that's certain.

Miss Fond. Dreadful idea!

Pert. O don't make yourself uneasy at all about it, if we should.

Miss Fond. Hark! Heavens!

Pert. Only a gang of tipsy rakes.

Miss Fond. Mercy! Where shall I fly? O! I shall drop with fear.

[*Enter three tipsy* GENTLEMEN.]

1st Gen. I say it was a damned good song—[*sings.*]—

A bottle of claret and lads that are merry.

A damnation good song.

2d Gen. Confound your braying.

3d Gen. [*Observing Miss Fond and Pert.*] Ha, my darlings.

2d Gen. My pretty dear.

Miss Fond. O, mercy!

3d. Gen. Kiss me.

[*To Pert, who gives him a box on the ear.*

Pert. It shall be a kiss of my hand, then.

3d Gen. Zounds.

1st Gen. [*sings.*]

A bottle of claret and lads that are merry.

A devilish good song. Hollo! what are you two smuggling at? [*He runs to them, Miss Fond screams, Pert slaps them on the face, the Captain and Sly enter, and a scuffle ensues.*]

Sly. [*To 2d Gen.*] Take that.

2d Gen. Damnation!

Capt. Keep off, gentlemen, I entreat you.

3d Gen. Who the devil are you?

Sly. [*To the 1st Gen.*] And who are you?

1st. Gen. [*sings.*]

A bottle of claret and lads that are merry.

[*Enter* WATCHMEN.]

George King. To the watch-house with them.

Luny O'Rogherty. Oh! let's have a little more of the fun first.

John Ap Jones. Coot Gentlemen, pehave, pehave.

Donald Macdonald. Nae respect of persons, we'll tak the whole tot wi' us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The Watch-house.*

PAUKIE MACLUCAR *at a Table, writing;* MISS TABBY *at the one side, the* DOCTOR *at the other; behind, such kind of Men and Women as may be expected in a Watch-house at Midnight.*

Pau. Patience, Tabbitha, patience, till I make black and white of what ye say. [*While writing he is disturbed by the romping of the prisoners behind, and cries to them.*] Have done wi' your gallanting: if ye will gallant, ye's no gallant here. Nae mare of this stramash, or I'll gar some of ye claw where its no yuckie. [*To the Doctor.*] So, Doctor, ye were walking up and down the front of the house.

Doc. I was only walking on the pavement.

Pau. Weel, weel, dinna be snapping at my words, I did na mean that ye were like a flee on the lozen of a window. Ye were walking before the house.

Doc. Bless you, Sir, the house was not walking.

Pau. Heh, Doctor, but ye're devilish witty. We must be on our peremptors wi' you. I did nae say that the house was following you like a gawky after a recruiting serjeant. But ye got the bundle?

Doct. Yes, I got the bundle.

Pau. Coming out of the house?

Doct. Yes, and they ran off as fast as they could.

Pau. Stay, stay, doctor, what would ye be at? to say that a bundle ran awa' is what I call a slip o' the gab, but ye'll no jouke me—Ye got the bundle, confess?

Tabby. Yes, he got the bundle.

Pau. Toots! woman, dinna sca'd your lips in ither folk's kail—frae whom did ye get the bundle?

Doct. I found it somehow in my arms.

Pau. That's a whid—wasna' it a woman that brought the bundle out o' the house?

Doct. O Yes! it was Mrs. Pert.

Pau. Hoot toot, hoot toot, didna', Tabitha come out o' the house?

Doct. My dear sir, she was in the house all the time. [*Paukie in the mean while shuts his book and takes off his spectacles.*]

Pau. It's a clear burglary; its proven, proven, the libel's proven. Compose yoursels for your latter end! Tabitha, ye may deight your neb and flee up, there's na redemption for you.

Enter WATCHMEN *with* MISS FOND, PERT, CAPT. DASH, SLY, *and* GENTLEMEN.]

Pau. Here's work that might serve a Lord Provost.

Tabby. My niece, Pert, and Captain Dash too!

Doct. [*to Sly*] I'm very glad to see you, Sir. How fortunate to meet a man of your science and erudition here! I hope you completed your observation on the comet.

Tabby. Will nothing bring you to your senses? Don't you see that he is no other than Captain Dash's servant,—and so it was with him you were star-gazing?

Doct. Sure enough and it is Sly—O Mercury, God of thieves, I understand it all now.

1st Gen. I say, Mr. Constable, give us a song?

Pau. What's that callan saying?

1st Gen. Damnation, give us a song.

Pau. Whisht man, ye're fu'! Consider wha ye're addressing.

1st Gen. A song—silence for a song.

Pau. If ye'll no be quiet, I'll gar ye sing the song ye learnt first.

All the Gents. Bravo, bravo, Sir Archy!

Luny O'Rogherty. [*Laughs heartily as if he expected a row.*]

Pau. What are ye neghering at, Luny; Geordie King, and Donald Macdonald, do your duty; I'll let these chiels ken wha's master here.

[*The Watchmen take them to the back of the stage.*

Tabby. This, Sir, is my niece, this is the Captain that she ran away with, and that impudent fellow there is his servant.

Pau. [*To Pert.*] And wha are ye no?

Pert. This lady's maid, at your service.

Pau. Nae doubt, ye're at the service o' any body. But can I hae been mistaen? Can I hae been a' this time in the clouds? and will this robbery, that I thought as plainly made out as it could be by the fifteen lords of Edinbro', prove but the prank of a whipper snapper flunkie? I canna hae lost my natural discernment. Madam and Sir, gie me proof of your story. Let me have evidence that the elopement is no a device to get you off?

Tabby. The Doctor will not give his consent to the marriage.

Pau. I'm not to be bumbouzlit this way. What for, Doctor, will ye no gie your consent? Unless ye gie your consent this instant, I'll commit you; for there maun be some devilry at the bottom of your refusal.

Sly. You have hit the right nail on the head. I would not take fifty guineas in your place for my chance with Captain Dash, if you obtain the Doctor's consent.

Pau. Say ye sae? O ho! Doctor, either consent to the marriage of this pair———

Doct. Sir, Sir———
Pau. Do ye consent?
Doct. Philosophy-
Pau. Geordie, Donald, Luny.
Tabby. O, my reputation! All this will be in the papers to-morrow.
Sly. Yes, Doctor, to the ruin of your character as a philosopher; Comet, and all shall be published.
Doct. O, ye Gods! —
Pau. Do ye consent? For if ye're condamacious——
Tabby. O yes, he consents.
Doct. Alas!
Sly. He consents!
Pru. I tak ye a' to witness. Nae recanting, Doctor, nae recanting. Captain, I wish ye mickle felicity with Miss, and Miss I expect a bride's favor. [*To Sly.*] Ye'll be sure to bring't lad. I live twa numbers aboon the House, that stands in the pillary in Pall Mall.

EPILOGUE.

Weel friends, what's a' this hobleshow about?
Ye're making mouths to damn the play, nae doubt.
Ay there's a critic loon, there, in the pit,
Gude save's, how many more around him sit!
O I beseech you, and to do't I'm blate,
As lang's ye dow respite the poet's fate.
He's but a sprout, a callan green and saft,
With little knack at the play actor's craft.
The eagles, Sirs, before they cleave the air
Sit on their hunkers clad in puddock hair.—
Hoot, hoot, for shame, be douce and dinna hiss,
I'm sure ye often thole worse plays than this.

THE END.

Remarks on the Watch-house.

This little piece affords a decided proof of the advantage of such a publication as that which we have undertaken. We are informed that the principal character was composed for the late Mr. Cooke, who excelled so much in the enunciation of the Scotish dialect, and for whom, notwithstanding all his varied excellence in many different walks of the drama, no play was brought out during the whole time of his engagements in London, calculated to show any new shade of those extraordinary powers with which he was so eminently gifted. To whatever cause this was owing, it is a curious fact in the history of the stage, and we are glad to be able, so early, to give a proof in "The New British Theatre," that the cause did not rest altogether with the public; for the character of Paukie M'Lucar in this piece, demonstrates that there was at least the disposition to furnish variety, and what is here merely sketched, might certainly have been expanded and filled up, so as to have shown the public this favorite actor in a character less disagreeable than that of the Man of the World, and more natural than Sir Archy M'Sarcasm.

The constable of the night is a broad and strong delineation of vulgar shrewdness and self-conceit, but we apprehend that the language is too purely Scottish to be well understood by any but the natives of Scotland. In this respect, indeed, we think *the authors* have erred.

The language which both Sir Archy and Sir Pertinax use, is not Scotish but imperfect English, to which Cooke had the power of adding that deep and full accent which the Scots, even after many years' residence in England, still retain. This error, however, admitted of easy amendment, had there been any disposition within the theatre to have indulged the public with more of Cooke.

On so slight a piece as this, it would be ridiculous to waste much criticism. The incidents are farcically extravagant, without being out of nature; but all the chief characters, with the exception of the constable, are caricatures. The sketch of Luny O'Rogherty is tolerably well conceived, but it is only an outline. The idea of his calling the hours too loud in going his rounds, is a characteristic trait as national as his love of a row.

Some of the expressions in this play may be objected to as rather too plainly transcribed from the vocabulary of common life, and as such we were disposed to have taken the liberty of altering them, but upon consideration, and regarding Shakspeare as the guide and example, we found that the expressions could not be changed without impairing the individuality of the characters, which in all dramatic composition is the principal excellence.

We have been furnished with a history of the design and composition of this piece, but it is inconsistent with our plan to publish such things.

THE INTRIGUES OF A DAY,

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MR. HARLEY, a wealthy Merchant in the City

MR. FRANCIS, his Cousin, who has made a fortune in India.

MR. WARREN, partner with MR. HARLEY.

MR. CLERMONT, first Clerk to MR. HARLEY.

SIR JAMES O'RYAN, an Irish Adventurer.

FABRICIO, an Ex-Jesuit.

RIMALDO, a Poet.

JOHN, Footman to MR. HARLEY.

THOMPSON, a Farmer.

ROBERTS, Friend to Mr. WARREN.

MRS. HARLEY, second wife to MR. HARLEY, related to SIR JAMES O'RYAN.

EMILY, Daughter to MR. HARLEY, by his First Wife.

LUCY, Waiting Maid to MRS. HARLEY, and EMILY.

Lu. Dear Ma'am, I never shall be able to remember those outlandish words. But that turban is so becoming, it makes your laship look ten years younger than you really are.

Mrs. H. Ten years younger than I really am!—you joke, Lucy; you would make me look quite like a baby.

Lu. Not like a baby to be sure, Ma'am, but at least as young as Miss Emily.

Mrs. H. Pshaw; always Miss Emily: there's nothing so very extraordinary in my looking as young as Miss Emily; there's no such great difference in our ages.

Lu. (*aside*) Not above five-and-twenty years, I believe; (*to her*) will your laship please to wear the turban.

Mrs. H. No, I must be only *coiffée en cheveux;* for if the stranger should come—

Lu. Oh, I guess; the gentleman that your laship has been so long expecting about the chronology.

Mrs. H. Chronology!--blundering again: 'tis not *Chro-* but *Craniology*, child. Chronology is the old and now almost exploded science which instructs us how to know the moderns from the ancients: to distinguish a Greek from a Roman, a dynasty from a revolution. Craniology is the noble science lately discovered, which teaches us, by simply feeling the scull of any one to discover at once the character, disposition, and even profession of the person.

Lu. That's very wonderful. But pray, Ma'am, I should like to know whether by feeling a scull, people can tell whether there be any brains in it or not.

Mrs. H. What does your impertinence mean? Do you insinuate that neither Mr. Fabricio, who teaches, nor I, who study this science, have much brains? Lucy, why are you feeling the shape of my head?

Lu. Oh dear me, I hope your laship doesn't think that a poor servant could have any disrespectful thoughts about her mistress' scull; and as to Mr. Fabricio, I'm sure nobody can say but that he wants—

Mrs. H. What does he want? for you seem to insinuate that he wants something.

Lu. (*While she is adjusting Mrs. Harley's hair.*) Indeed, Ma'am, I think he wants taste, for he had the impudence to say that Miss Emily was the handsomest woman at the play last night, when, you know, Ma'am, that your laship was there.

Mrs. H. Did he say so indeed, Lucy? Did Mr. Fabricio say so? If it had been our Indian Cousin, Mr. Francis, I should not, indeed, have been so much surprised, for the girl seems absolutely to have turned his grey head. —That curl a little more over the left eye, Lucy.

Lu. But he'll be quite in another story when he sees your laship to-day, I'll be bound for it.—There's a head for you, do but please to look, Madam.

Mrs. H. 'Tis not much amiss.—And now, Lucy, go to that closet and fetch me the head that came yesterday. (*Lucy goes to the closet and brings a scull from it.*) This is the scull of a Georgian slave, which Fabricio was so kind as to procure for me—what beauty, what sublimity, is there in the form! O deserted palace of the soul!

Lu. Lord bless me, you learned folks have such odd fancies: for my part, I can't, for the life of me, look at it; the sight of such a thing makes me remember death. I'm sure if I had half as many empty heads about my room as your laship has, I should never dream of any thing but grubs and worms—O Lord!

Mrs. H. If my head were as naked as this, I flatter myself it would not be less beautiful. Let me compare— Yes, the measures are exact, and so Fabricio assured me; he said it was the very model of my own scull. The owner of this charming relic sung like a nightingale, danced to perfection—Yes, Fabricio is right; my propensities, but for a cruel destiny, would have led me to have done the same. Why was I not taught to sing in my youth, I might then have excelled this Georgian slave. But hold—what do I see! Lucy, was ever such a numscull as thou art— this is not the head of the Georgian slave, but that of a baboon.

Lu. A baboon! surely, Ma'am, that's impossible; for your laship said but just now that 'twas exactly like your own.

Mrs. H. Hold your impertinent tongue, or—but I hear somebody on the stairs: go and see who it is, Lucy.

(*Lucy goes out and returns.*)

Lu. 'Tis Mr. Warren, Ma'am; he begs to speak with your laship on business of importance.

Mrs. H. He is welcome; show him in.

Lu. (*as she goes out.*) More money for us, but we must take care that he does not see Miss Emily.

(*She goes out and returns with Warren.*)

Mrs. H. Good morning, Mr. Warren; you have business with me, you say—leave us, Lucy. [*Exit Lucy.*

War. Which you will easily divine, Madam. I was informed yesterday by Sir James O'Ryan, that you were in immediate want of a thousand pounds, and had honored me so far as to desire my assistance in the matter. I was eager therefore to wait upon you without delay, to assure you how much I rejoice in any opportunity of rendering a service to Mrs. Harley.

Mrs. H. I am extremely obliged, Mr. Warren, by this fresh instance of your politeness. Fabricio was well inspired when he suggested the addressing myself to you rather than to my husband: not but that Mr. Harley must have approved the motives which make me desire the money.

War. No one can doubt the excellence of Mrs. Harley's motives.

Mrs. H. My secrecy proceeds solely from delicacy to my cousin, Sir James O'Ryan. The money is to relieve him from a temporary embarrassment under which he labors through some roguish practices of his steward in Ireland.

War. To whom I shall feel myself eternally obliged, since he has afforded me an opportunity of showing my devotion to Mrs. Harley.

Mrs. H. That is truly gallant, Mr. Warren.

War. Yet much as I might wish not to lessen my little merits in your eyes, Madam, I must be compelled to own, that my services are not wholly disinterested. I have a suit—

Mrs. H. How, Sir! I scarcely understand you—what can you mean?

War. Pardon me, Madam, I know that I have no claim, no hope, but from your candor, your compassion,—no excuse for my presumption but a passion which I cannot resist, and the rare beauty and accomplishments of the object of it; and could I but engage you—

Mrs. H. Mr. Warren, do you know to whom you speak? Do you consider what and who I am?

War. Alas, Madam, love such as mine cannot consider

—I know, I feel that my presumption is great; I have perhaps gone too far, yet how resist the temptation of endeavouring to secure the favor of one who has it so much in her power to promote my interests with Miss Emily.

Mrs. H. What do I hear? Miss Emily! All these high-flown compliments were then addressed to the daughter of my husband! Indeed, Miss Emily may be proud of her conquest.

War. To whom else could Mrs. Harley suppose them addressed? she could not surely suspect me of wishes more presumptuous.

Mrs. H. 'Tis well, Sir, at least I perfectly understand you now; but if I have any interest with my husband in recommending a son-in-law to his choice, believe me that interest will not be employed for Mr. Warren.

[Enter LUCY.]

Lu. Madam, breakfast is ready.

Mrs. H. I attend.

War. *(Goes up to her and says in a half-whisper)* may I hope for pardon, Madam?

Mrs. H. Oh certainly, Sir; there can be no offence to me in your loving Miss Emily. The men are all crazy after the girl, I think. [*Exeunt Mrs. Harley and Lucy, the latter makes signs to Warren to wait there, and that she will return.*]

War. *(alone)* That interest will not be employed for Mr. Warren.—Very well, Madam, then believe me, the thousand pounds will not be advanced by Mr. Warren: and believe too, that without your interest, Miss Emily will be possessed by Mr. Warren. He has an advocate so powerful in the affections of his charmer, that all others may well be dispensed with, an elopement is a thing to which a handsome young fellow can at all times easily persuade a girl of spirit. *(Lucy returns.)*

Lu. What an indiscretion, Mr. Warren: how could you think of coming hither? what can you have got in your head?

War. I had business of importance both with Mr. and Mrs. Harley, and above all I wished for a private interview with my lovely Emily—haste then, Lucy, and conduct me to her; the moments are precious.

Lu. How often will you force me to repeat that you must wait with patience for some favorable moment, and

not pretend to rush upon her in such a hasty and abrupt manner.

War. There is nothing hasty or abrupt in what I ask. You have long promised me an interview with my lovely girl—all her letters express an ardent desire to see me, and the happy moment is now arrived when our mutual wishes may be accomplished.

Lu. Impossible! My young mistress is at breakfast with the family, and cannot be seen; but rely on my cares, and on the interest I take in your concerns—the interest for your happiness, I mean, for interest of any other kind is wholly a stranger to my heart.

War. Oh I know very well that you are perfectly disinterested. Here, there is something to induce you to maintain your disinterestedness. *(gives her a purse.)*

Lu. Such an inducement is irresistible—Depend upon me, Sir.

War. To procure me at this moment an interview with my Emily.

Lu. Impossible, I say. *(aside)* How I wish that I had the letter.

War. Lucy, you torture me—have I not reason to fear some deceit? Ought I to believe what you say? May I rely on the attachment of my lovely girl?

Lu. Indisputably.

War. May I indeed believe she loves me?

Lu. Immeasurably.

War. Will she listen with favor to a proposal I wish to make her?

Lu. Incontestibly.

War. Would she be ready to adopt an easy plan for hastening our union?

Lu. Infallibly.

War. Has she resolution to take a bold and decisive step?

Lu. Immediately.

War. I am satisfied, *incomprehensibly.* Then, Lucy, it only remains to impart my plan——

[Enter JOHN.]

John. (giving Warren the letter which he and Lucy had written.) Miss Emily charged me, Sir, to send you this letter in the course of the day, and I am happy now to deliver it into your own hands.

War. Oh, these are indeed her lovely characters. *(he reads)* "Illusions of sleep—sensations truly delicious—write then often—" Transporting words—No, no, here can be no deceit. Lucy, I must see her, though but for a moment.

Lu. Impossible, I say: will you never be satisfied! Go to the Plough Tavern, there write what you have to say, and in an hour or two I will come for the letter.

John. Which I hope won't cost you as much trouble as the last letter cost me. *(to Warren)* Has Lucy told you of my misfortune, Sir?

War. No, indeed, she has not.

John. I was obliged to stay very late in town that day, so that in coming home I was stopped, and robbed of what you had been so good as to give me, and into the bargain I had my arm almost broke in defending your letter, which the robbers suspected had notes in it.

War. I understand—here's to repair your loss. *(gives him money)* But another time contrive to go home earlier. *(aside)* The harpies! I trust, however, there will soon be an end of it.

John. I assure you, Sir, I don't desire to be late; there's nothing so agreeable in being robbed.

War. And so, Lucy, I am positively not to see Miss Emily?

Lu. Positively not. Write as I bid you, and depend upon my coming for the letter.

War. Well, since it must be so, and, Lucy, as you present the letter, urge my Emily, with all thy force, with all thy eloquence, urge her to consent to the plan which it will propose. If you succeed, your fortune is made as well as my own. [*Exit.*

Lu. So, I am glad we are rid of him at last. I thought he never would have taken himself away. As sure as can be, this affair will some day bring us into a fine scrape: I know of but one way to put an end to it, and that is, to spirit up Clermont to an elopement with Miss Emily.

John. Which will not be an easy matter: he talks so much of his honor, and the obligations he owes to Mr. Harley, that he'll have ten thousand scruples about taking such a step.

Lu. Very true: strange that he cannot lay aside his

scrupulosity but for a sufficient time just to run away with a lovely girl, who is ready to fly into his arms, and to lay a large fortune at his feet. If he don't take care, he'll be juggled at last; for while he is so shilly-shally about accepting it honorably, there's our generous friend Mr. Warren, the illustrious Sir James O'Ryan, Baronet, and his companion in craft, Mr. Fabricio, all scrambling for it, like so many wolves, putting honor and scruples quite out of the question.

John. Marvellously well thought and expressed, Mrs. Lucy. Thus goes the world. Sir James would deceive Madam, in hopes to get Miss Emily's money. Fabricio flatters Madam, in hopes to share with Sir James Miss Emily's money; and we dupe Mr. Warren out of his own money, by giving him hopes that he shall have Miss Emily's.

Lucy. Then since money is the grand pivot on which all things turn in this world, let us hasten to visit our treasury and add this to our stock.

John. And this also. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Drawing-room, at* MR. HARLEY'S.

FABRICIO *seated by a table, on which are several books, and papers, pens and ink, &c.*

Fab. Verily I begin to think that old proverbs are not so entirely devoid of sense as I once esteemed them. There is one which tells us that honesty is the best policy, but the system of morality taught in the school where I was educated, amid the followers of the great Ignatius, was not founded on this principle; and I have acted through life rather in conformity with the principles of my sect, than of those inculcated by the proverb. Already have I made a good market of Mrs. Harley's vanity and credulity; but I begin to be tired of wearing a perpetual mask, of being obliged eternally to weigh my words and actions, of guarding, while I am duping others, against being duped

myself. Well then, if I can but accomplish the object now in view, of marrying Sir James O'Ryan to Miss Emily, for which the Baronet has promised me a liberal reward, I am determined afterwards to amend my ways, and make the experiment whether more real happiness is not to be found in leading an honest life than a life of roguery.

[Enter JOHN.]

John. A lad from the Plough Tavern, Sir, has just brought this letter.

Fab. [*Opens the letter and reads it.*] Does the messenger wait?

John. He wishes to know, if there be any answer.

Fab. Let him say that I will be with the gentleman in an hour. [*John is going.*] Hark ye, John, is breakfast ready?

John. It is, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Fab. Let me see once more. [*He reads the letter.*] "My dear Fab: Before I present myself to day at Mr. Harley's, I wish for some private conversation with you. I do not like this Mr. Francis;—something whispers me that there's mischief in the wind, and that we cannot too much hasten the execution of our plans. Come then and let me know how matters stand with regard to Emily, that we may take measures for speedily terminating the affair. Your's truly, O'RYAN."

Indeed, my noble Baronet, I have always had the same apprehensions of this Francis,—I know that in India he played the knight-errant's part, and rescued thousands from injustice and oppression, while their gratitude poured wealth into his coffers,—'twas so *he* made his fortune. What then may not be expected from his lynx-like eye, in the family of his own relations here at home. But I must first attend the breakfast—afterwards, Sir James, I am wholly at your service.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The breakfast room at* MR. HARLEY'S. *The Breakfast table set out.*

Enter MR. HARLEY, *followed by* EMILY.

Em. You seem disturbed, papa. Can any thing unpleasant have occurred thus early in the morning?

Mr. H. Unpleasant!—I think for some time, early or late, I have never met with any thing but what was unpleasant.—Yes, to be sure, something very unpleasant has occurred this morning.

Em Might one presume to ask——

Mr. H. And then by way of mending matters, see where my wife comes with her precious satellite Fabricio at her heels. I wonder whether the house is ever again to be free from that fellow.

Em. But with them comes our cousin Francis, and he is so good, so pleasant, that his company is an antidote to every thing disagreeable.

Enter MRS. HARLEY, *handed by* FABRICIO, MR. FRANCIS *following.*

Mrs. H. Ha! ha! ha!--Yes, indeed, the stupid girl gave me the baboon's skull instead of the Georgian slave's, and as you had assured me, Mr. Fabricio, that the latter was the perfect model of my own, I was endeavouring to trace out the resemblance. Gentlemen, you will please to be seated. [*The company seat themselves at the table.*]

Fab. Nor am I at all surprised, Madam, that you had found a resemblance. As the highest virtues are nearly allied to vices, so the height of beauty borders on deformity: and as I told you in my last craniological lecture, the occiput———

Mr. H. Nay you need not take so much pains to prove how it was possible for Madam's scull to resemble a baboon's. We all see the likeness plain enough, as to the furniture at least, if not as to the form.

Fab. Mr. Harley, you astonish me. I could not have conceived it possible for such a *grossiéreté* to pass your lips.

Mr. H. Probably it never would have passed my lips if you had never come into the house.

Mrs. H. And if you mean that I should stay in your house, none such must ever pass them again.

Mr. H. Nay, 'twould be no such very great loss if you were out of it.

Em. My dear, dear papa, you really forget yourself. I never saw you transgress so against good manners. Something unpleasant, you said, had occurred this morning.

Mr. H. Unpleasant--look ye there. (*He pulls a roll of papers out of his pocket and throws it upon the table.*)

Look over these bills, and then see whether I have much reason to be pleased either with Mrs. Harley or that prompter of all her extravagancies.

Mr. F. Surely, my dear Sir, you cannot be displeased at your wife's indulging in such little elegant expenses as are absolutely necessary to a woman of fashion, to a lover of science and literature.

Mr. H. A woman of fashion!——a lover of science and literature!——there's the very thing,—what has my wife to do with being either? I wanted a comfortable domestic companion, and therefore I married a woman without fortune, because I thought she'd be kind and complying. And so she was for about two months; but evil communications corrupt good manners: she had then the misfortune to become acquainted with Mr. Fabricio and———

Fab. Misfortune, Sir?—do you mean that I lead Mrs. Harley into expenses?

Mr. H. Indeed, I do, Sir; and here's the clearest proof of it. (*Taking up the roll of papers.*) Wasn't it you that first put it into her head, to learn music, and Italian, and then the Lord knows what must be spent on music, musical instruments, and Italian books.

Mr. F. Surely, my dear Cousin, a husband cannot complain of his wife's learning Italian—'tis the language of love itself: every expression of tenderness becomes doubly tender when clothed in sounds so soft, so sweet.

Mr. H. As to that, my ears will never be the better or the worse for the tender things they hear from Mrs. Harley, either in English or Italian.

Fab. My dear Mr. Harley,———

Mr. H. Please to hold your tongue, Sir, when I desire to speak, or I shall quickly show you the way out of my house.

Mrs. H. Oh pray, Mr. Fabricio, don't attempt to check him, let us hear all he has to say.

Mr. H. I mean you should hear all, my love—I certainly mean you should hear all. The next fancy was, that there was no taste in my grounds here, and the fine kitchen garden, made only six years before, was all destroyed, the walls were thrown down, the hot-houses laid in ruins—hav'nt had an early peach or nectarine since.

Mrs. H. The *gourmand.*

Mr. H. And all were piled together in the middle of the garden to make a mountain, on the top of which they have stuck a thing that they call a Temple of the Muses, tho' folks tell me that these Muses were nothing but a parcel of Pagan whores.

Mr. F. My dear Mr. Harley, you forget yourself; such words in the company of ladies——

Mr. H. Very true, Cousin, and I beg pardon, but I can't help being a little angry.

Mr. F. Indeed it is no longer a Temple of the Muses, but a Craniological lecture room, as I learn by an inscription newly placed over the door of the labyrinth that leads to it.

Mr. H. I don't care what name she pleases to give it, and I suppose it will have a dozen others before tis 'done with, but I know to my sorrow, that here's another bill brought in by Mr. Fabricio, as superintendant of her works, amounting to one thousand, nine hundred, and ninety eight pounds, eighteen shillings, and eight pence. Is this a folly or not, I ask?

Mr. F. Nay, Cousin, surely this is not an unreasonable charge for so much destruction and re-creation.

Mrs. H. Be calm, be calm, my love, you are too warm.

Mr. H. I wont be calm, I will speak out, I have held my tongue too long. The next thing was, that Madam must dabble in the sciences; and here's another bill of no less than five hundred and seven pounds, fifteen shillings, for globes celestial and globes terrestrial; for microscopes to examine the little toe of a fly, and telescopes to see what the man in the moon's about—nothing so foolish 'tis to be hoped as the women on the earth: and lastly———

Mrs. H. Good morning, Gentlemen, I see that my company may very well be dispensed with. Mr. Fabricio, I shall expect you in the Craniological lecture room.

[*Exit angrily.*

Mr. H. The Craniological lecture room!—Yes, there's the top of all the follies. Would you believe it, Cousin, here's a bill of no less than three hundred and forty pounds, five shillings, for nothing in the world but rotten bones. Zounds it almost makes one wish that some people's bones———

Mr. F. Come, come, my dear Cousin, be cautious what you say; you really are too warm: let us drop the subject at present, or you may perhaps be led to say something, which you will hereafter wish in vain could be recalled. You see that you have already driven away Mrs. Harley.

Mr. H. You wont pretend, I hope, Cousin, that this craniology is not all da——I mean very great nonsense.

Mr. F. To you or to me it may seem so, Cousin, but we should not pretend to regulate the tastes of others: and if Mrs. Harley's pursuits do not entirely coincide with yours, you should have a mutual indulgence for each other. She does not attempt to control your expenses in newspapers and you must allow that they cost you something in a year.

Mr. H. Why, Lord, Cousin, since Mrs. Harley destroyed my fine kitchen garden, you know I've no other amusement in the country but the newspapers. Besides, I only take in the Morning Chronicle, Post, and Herald, the Sun, the Star, the Times, the Commercial Chronicle, the General Evening Post, Bell's Weekly Messenger, the Observer, the——

Mr. F. Hold, hold, you have already enumerated a dozen at least, and you cannot deny that they cost nearly as much in a year as Mrs. Harley spends in her scientific pursuits. In short, your fortune is ample, and neither of you need be over rigid with the other in these matters.

Mr. H. Well, perhaps I have been a little hasty: so you may go after her, if you like, Cousin Francis, and tell her that I shall be glad to kiss and be friends again: tho' I know the end of that will be, that I must pay all her bills, and you don't yet know half her extravagancies.

Mr. F. I go with pleasure, cousin. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. Moreover, as if all the devils in hell were let loose to plague and torment me this morning, there's Mr. Clermont, he must needs—

Em. Mr. Clermont, papa? Surely he cannot have done any thing to give you uneasiness.

Mr. H. And pray why not, Miss Emily? Why should Mr. Clermont be the only person upon earth that does not give me uneasiness?

Em. Dear papa, you always used to say that he was such a good, steady, discreet young man.

Mr. H. So I thought him. But here has he drawn a hundred pounds of his little fortune out of my hands at one stroke, without saying a word to me about the matter; it must be therefore for some purpose that he's ashamed of.

Em. Why should my dear papa suppose that? I cannot think—

Mr. H. You cannot think—and pray, Miss, what have you to do with thinking about the matter? I very much admire a young lady of eighteen pretending to think. No, my dear, pray leave thinking to your old father, who, having a few more years over his head, must be somewhat a better judge than yourself. But here comes our peacemaker, handing in my dear rib.

[Enter MR. FRANCIS and MRS. HARLEY.]

Mr. F. I have had some difficulty, cousin, to calm the tempest you had raised; but I have prevailed at length, and Mrs. Harley consents to receive the kiss of reconciliation.

Mr. H. [*going up to her rather roughly, and giving her a hearty kiss.*] That's right, love, you must not bear malice. To be sure I did thrust a little home, but we must all forget and forgive. Emily here knows that I've had many things to teaze and vex me this morning.

Mrs. H. Well, sir, as family discussions are the most painful of all things, I consent to a renovation of our former amity; but beware of a renewal of these scenes.

Fab. What magnanimity! Amiable woman!—happy Mr. Harley!

Mrs. H. And now, Mr. Francis, since I may be allowed to put in a word, permit me to request an explanation of one thing that passed during our *embrouillement.* You alluded to an inscription newly placed over the door of my labyrinth; it was the first word I had ever heard of it: could you repeat it?

Mr. F. Indeed, madam, I am sorry to say that I do not recollect the lines; I only remember learning from what I read, the great transformation which the Temple of the Muses had undergone.

Fab. I believe, madam, that I can elucidate this mat-

ter. As the emblems with which the temple and labyrinth are decorated are certainly more appropriate to the former than to the present purpose to which the temple is devoted, I thought I could not do better than explain this in language inspired by the Muses themselves.

Mrs. H. What a charming idea! Do, Mr. Fabricio, favor us with the lines.

Fab. With the company's permission. [*Bowing respectfully to them, they all nod assent: he repeats*]

Sacred no longer to th' Aonian maids,
Far other forms inhabit now these shades.
While emblems of grim Death around are rang'd,
The mountain to the darksome cave seems chang'd.
Yet here, as o'er stern Pluto's drear domains,
We all must own a fair Proserpine reigns.

Mr. F. What beautiful lines!—" a fair Proserpine reigns;"—elegant thought! and they are your own writing, Mr. Fabricio?

Mr. H. Aye, that I'll be bound they are, for nobody else—

Mr. F. Cousin, cousin, you forget.

Mr. H. I think 'tis you forget, cousin; and I wonder.

Mr. F. At what, my good friend? at my having a just feeling of true sublimity.

Mr. H. Well, well, I believe you're all mad alike; so I wish you good morning; the newspapers are probably arrived, and I'll just give them a run over. [*Exit.*

Fab. I, madam, for my part, must beg to be excused our craniological lecture this morning. I have very particular business, which obliges me to go out immediately.

Mrs. H. How unfortunate! Cannot your business be postponed to another day? I wish'd particularly for the lecture this morning, as you gave me hopes that your craniological friend from the Continent might make his long-talked-of visit to-day.

Fab. I am sorry to say that my business will not admit of a moment's delay; and for the rest, I am afraid we shall not be so fortunate as to see my friend. I have heard nothing from him, and he was to send me word when he could fulfil his engagement. You will therefore excuse me, madam. [*Exit.*

Mr. F. Come, my sweet Emily, I may then be in-

dulged with a little music. Mrs. Harley, too, will perhaps favor us with her company. Shall we adjourn to the music-room?

Mrs. H. With all my heart; at present I do not see any better mode of killing time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Room at the Plough Tavern.*

SIR JAMES O'RYAN and FABRICIO *meeting.*

Sir J. So, Fab., thou art come at length—I began to think thou hadst an intention of jilting me—what can have detained thee thus?

Fab. Not the pleasantest circumstance in the world—I have been listening to a little matrimonial battledore and shuttlecock. The old gentleman begins to run rusty—the yoke, I fear, will soon be wholly shaken off. I never heard him venture such lengths before. I too had more than one rap on the knuckles.

Sir J. Gadzooks, Fab., this must be Francis's work.

Fab. And yet the hypocrite carried it off with such a demure face and smooth manner, affecting to make himself the moderator between the husband and wife, checking Mr. Harley's hasty sallies. Confound the—

Sir J. Ha! even so? Well then, Fab., we must endeavour to dispatch our affairs as expeditiously as possible; tell me, how go they on? will Mrs. Harley assist our plans on Emily?

Fab. I never had so much trouble with her in any matter as in this. She knows not how to digest Miss Emily's becoming My Lady, while she remains only plain Mistress. I told her, however, that I could easily procure a baronetage for Mr. Harley, which somewhat obviated that objection. And now tell me, have you spoken to Warren about the thousand pounds.

Sir J. I have: and he promised to see Mrs. Harley on the business without delay.

Fab. Then 'tis all settled, no doubt, for he was at the villa this morning, and had a private conference with Mrs. Harley.

Sir J. Bravo! and you know, Fab., that this money is your's, on Mrs. Harley's consent being obtained to my union with Emily.

Fab. With two thousand pounds more on the day of

your marriage; I have your written promise to this effect. But apropos, Sir James, one word. This engagement is not recorded on stamp paper, therefore not strictly valid; 'tis not that I have any doubt of your honor, but I think it right that matters of business should always be conducted according to the regular forms. We can't command events, and we are then prepared for whatever may happen.

Sir J. [*aside.*] The cautious rascal! [*to him.*] You are right, my dear Fab., perfectly right; I certainly wish to give you all possible security; and if you will meet me to-morrow at my attorney's—[*aside*] where you shall be sure not to find me—

Fab. There's no occasion to wait till to-morrow; an experienced workman is never without his tools. [*He opens his pocket-book, takes out a stamp, and begins writing.*] I am always for the present time, and if you will do me the favor—

Sir J. [*aside*] How can I shuffle him off? [*to him* With all the pleasure in the world, my dear Fab., with all the pleasure in the world. But—but—if at last Mrs. Harley should not consent

Fab. [*continuing to write.*] The contract is of course void; there is no objection, however, on that account to its being now signed.

Sir J. [*aside*] Curse him, there's no shaking him off.

[*He takes the paper and signs it.*

Fab. [*putting the paper into his pocket-book*] So far is well; I only wish there was no other difficulty.

Sir J. No other difficulty; what do you mean?

Fab. Only that I am afraid some obstacles may arise from Miss Emily herself.

Sir J. The deuce! and why do you think so?

Fab. From a discovery I have this moment made, that her heart is already disposed of.

Sir J. The devil! and to whom? [*aside*] Rascal! to make me sign the contract before he told me this.

Fab. You have occasionally seen here a certain Mr. Clermont.

Sir J. Zounds! he! a clerk in her father's compting-house; and Emily can degrade herself so as to think of him?

Fab. Love is sometimes extremely condescending; and this Clermont is certainly a handsome young fellow.

Sir J. Curse the dog! and what is to be done?

Fab. Difficulties, my dear Sir James, are only a spur to true genius; 'tis not in vain that I bore during ten years the frock of St. Ignatius, and though compelled reluctantly to quit it, I have not forgotten the lessons I learned in that instructive seminary. What is to be done! Contrive that Clermont shall be banished the house in disgrace, and so that Emily herself shall be deceived.

Sir J. A project worthy of thee, my best of friends. But how shall this matter be brought about? If the question were to disgrace him with Mrs. Harley, I might perhaps be able to help you out.

Fab. As how?

Sir J. By a story I could tell—there must be some little variations from the truth; indeed that's a trifle; it relates to some remarks made by [illegible] Harley's Craniological Essay, which I can dress up as I please.

Fab. That may not be a bad auxiliary. As to the main point, I have an embryo project in my head;—Clermont has just withdrawn a hundred pounds of his little fortune from Mr. Harley's hands. This I learned at our breakfast, Miss Emily being present; indeed it was the occasion of her betraying herself. We have here a foundation, on which methinks a superstructure might be raised. I must reflect. [*He walks about.*]

Sir J. Great geniuses must not be disturbed when meditating projects for the good of mankind. Reflect as much as you please, sublime Fabricio, only fail not in due time to bring forth.

Fab. Yes—so—that may do. Sir James, have you brought Patrick with you?

Sir J. The dog was so drunk, though it was but nine o'clock in the morning when I set out, that he could'n't stand behind the carriage.

Fab. Very unlucky! Why isn't there a law made to prevent servants' drinking. I have the plan in my head—but how to execute it.

Sir J. Mr. Patrick, then, had the honor of being a

party concerned in your project. But, ah heavens! what sort of an animal do I behold there?

[Rimaldo *appears, peeping in at the door.*]

Rim. Mr. Fabricio—Mr. Fabricio—you are not alone, I see.

Fab. Oh is it you, Rimaldo? Come in, 'tis only my friend, Sir James O'Ryan; you needn't mind him. But what wind has blown you hither?

Rim. [*coming forward*] Wind indeed! 'Tis an ill wind, they say, that blows nobody good; and to be sure this wind has blown good to some folks, though not to your honor. Been at your lodgings in town—nobody there; been at Mr. Harley's—the bird was flown; glad to see, however, that my inscription has been put up; never wrote more beautiful lines in all my life—

"Sacred no longer to th' Aonian maids."

Fab. They are not much amiss, it must be confessed.

Rim. Oh, within these few days I have had a perfect explosion of ideas; such sallies of imagination: an absolute Parnassian frenzy. My poetic vein has flowed as the waters of Hippocrene, or rather rushed as the torrent of Cedron. Behold here the effect of my inspiration, every sort of Apollonic production. [*Pulling a parcel of papers out of his pocket.*]

Fab. I have no doubt that they are very fine, but I have not leisure now to attend to them. Hasten to the point.

Rim. Why then the point is, to speak in plain prose, without allegory or metaphor, that there has been the devil to pay with the little—

Fab. Oh, if that's all, 'tis in no such great hurry, 'twill do very well another time; so, if you've nothing else to say, Rimaldo—

Sir J. Nay, illustrious saint, thou hadst better hear him now. What! I warrant it, *brunette* was the word you cut short? Ah! Fab., Fab., thou art a sly dog; a true Jesuit after the petticoats. But why use ceremony with me? Believe me, I shan't have the better or worse opinion of thee for any thing thy Mercury can say.

Fab. Well, speak, Rimaldo. The little gypsey then does not yield?

Rim. Yield! all our schemes are baffled, quite blown up. Every thing's turned topsy-turvy since I saw you

last. Yesterday evening I went, accompanied by the bailiffs, and there exerted all my eloquence to persuade the girl that it was the duty of a child, even at the expense of her honor, to purchase the liberty of a parent, and had almost succeeded in making her believe it.

Sir J. Especially if the peccadillo should be committed with a son of the church.

Rim. Faith, no; I did not think of that, or else it would have been an excellent argument. But I talked of the great Mr. Fabricio as of a guardian angel sent by heaven to her assistance. I talked of his talents, his virtues.

Sir J. Talents and virtues!—Ha! ha! ha! Thou, a poet, shouldest have recollected the song of Daphne and Apollo, and have talked in a different strain.

Rim. Lord bless you, Sir, I talked of every thing. Above all, I descanted on the ecstasies she would feel at saving her aged parent from a prison, and contributing to the comfort of his declining years. I talked of his grey hairs descending in peace to the grave; though, by the way, the old gentleman wears a damn'd shabby caxon.

Sir J. Ha! ha! ha!—But all wouldn't do?

Rim. I was on the point of succeeding. The bailiffs had hold of the old gentleman; the brunette was on her knees imploring their compassion; and I was holding forth with more than usual eloquence, when on a sudden another guardian angel appeared, who, before one could say Jack Robinson, had paid the bailiffs, and sent 'em packing; raised the brunette from the ground, and given her to her aged parent's arms. They were pouring out their souls in effusions of gratitude and transport, while I, astounded and abashed, slunk away, and gained the street, very desirous not to be recognised by the guardian angel, who hitherto had not had leisure to bestow a glance on me.

Fab. You know the person, then?

Rim. Indeed, I do: nor is he wholly unknown to your honor: 'Twas neither more nor less than Mr. Clermont. I can't say whether his benevolence received the recompense which your honor's demanded, but I rather believe it was more disinterested.

Fab. Audacious scoundrel! And how the devil came he to the knowledge of this affair?

Rim. That's more than I can say. But you know he has a strange passion for seeking out and relieving objects in distress.

Fab. 'Twas, then, for this purpose, that he wanted the hundred pounds? But he shall pay this insult a hundred fold. I have thee now in a cleft stick, young man, and ere long thou shalt know to thy cost, that Fabricio will not be circumvented with impunity. Go, Rimaldo, and make pretty speeches to the bar-maid for a few minutes? I will call thee again presently.

Rim. If it would be the same thing to your honor, I had rather at this moment pay my court to the cook, than to the bar-maid. In the actual situation of my intestines, I should feel more inspired by the smell of a good hot beef steak, than by the most lovely pair of blue eyes that ever languished in a female head. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Ha! ha! ha! A curious original this. Whence comes he?

Fab. As you perceive, from Parnassus. But now to arrange my plan. Patrick, then, is not here?

Sir J. But I am here myself, cannot I serve——

Fab. No: 'tis a valet that I want, not a master; though there are many masters who might well pass for valets; still more, perhaps, for grooms.

Sir J. Caustic as ever. But how then can the matter be arranged?

Fab. I have it now, by means of this son of Apollo.

Sir J. And can you suppose that so great a poet will condescend to turn valet?

Fab. His stomach is so empty at present, that he will do any thing for money.

Sir J. He is certainly then a very convenient personage for thee, Fab. Indeed, the history he has related speaks him not over scrupulous. Where did you pick him up?

Fab. I have known him long. He has done me many little services. An actor at setting out in life, in that capacity he was damned; nor was fate more kind to him as a dramatic author. Obliged to seek some other mode of subsistence, he became a parish sexton, and as such was considered one of the most expert resurrection men in town.

Sir J. Aha! I smoke the thing, you became acquainted with him as a craniologist.

Fab. Even so.

Sir J. And he has been of great assistance to you in furnishing Mrs. Harley's craniological cabinet.

Fab. Right again. Deprived, however, of his employment, from being unfortunately detected, through over confidence in his own dexterity, his principal subsistence at present is derived from being poet laureat to two of the most popular ballad-singers in town; though he is ready to do any other little jobs that will increase his earnings. But I must summon him. The plan is almost arranged in my mind. [*He goes to the door, and calls*] Rimaldo!

Sir J. May I be made the confident of it?

Fab. You know, that ever since Mrs. Harley commenced her craniological studies, she has been wild for a bust of Dr. Gall.

Sir J. And knowing that one had been executed by a celebrated female sculptor in this country, commissioned you to apply to the lady to execute one for her.

Fab. Which commission I readily undertook.—But where can Rimaldo be? [*He calls again.*] Mr. Rimaldo! This bust Mrs. Harley expects every day; I do not expect it so soon.

Sir J. That I believe indeed, sublime genius.

Fab. I was employed to procure the marble for the lady to work upon. Marble is very dear in this country; it must be of the finest carrara. I could not get a block under thirty pounds. Mrs. Harley observed, that the price was exorbitant. [*He calls again.*] Rimaldo, I say.

Sir J. The money was, notwithstanding, remitted to you,—it is safe in your strong box, while the marble remains at the statuary's, and the lady rests wholly ignorant of the honor intended her.

Fab. Geniuses of a similar cast easily divine the thoughts of each other. But though the bust will not arrive to-day, a note of excuse on the subject may. [*He calls again.*] Rimaldo, I say, once more. You understand my plan now, Sir James.

Sir J. Confound me, if I understand an atom of it.

Fab. I'm sorry thou'rt so dull—but thou wilt comprehend it in due time, patience at present, for here comes our poet.

[Enter RIMALDO.]

Rim. Beg pardon, Sir, for making you call so often, but I was trying to coax the cook out of a nice mutton chop, which she'd got on the gridiron, and was in hopes I had succeeded, when your honor summoned me away, and obliged me to leave the kitchen as hungry as I went into it. For three whole days has my stomach been a stranger to those excellent things called beef and porter, and I'm afraid it will soon entirely forget what they are.

Fab. Not so, my worthy son of Phœbus. You must assist our vengeance on Mr. Clermont, and your recompense will be such as to silence the complainings of your internal grumbler.

Rim. Then I can tell your honor it must not be a small one.

Fab. Attend. In order to accomplish our purpose, you must quit for a moment the livery of Apollo, and assume that of the valet of a fair lady.

Rim. The character of a valet! Ye muses nine, and thou all resplendent Phœbus, pardon your favorite son this momentary degradation; 'tis but to procure the means of serving you in future with the more unwearied ardor.

Fab. Even so;—haste then and equip thyself in thy new garb.

Rim. That's easily said; but the garb must first be procured.

Fab. True, and you must get one at your return to town.

Rim. I can arrange the matter with less trouble. I know an honest broker in this neighbourhood, of whom I can hire a handsome livery, and a horse too, if necessary: I shall not be quite so well mounted as on Pegasus; however, on any horse, and with a decent coat on my back, I shall be effectually disguised; no one, I am sure, will recognise Rimaldo.

Sir J. Certainly, if the coat you now wear be your usual one: ha! ha! ha!

Rim. But, gentlemen, you must make the necessary advances. Brokee, though a very honest and liberal-minded fellow, won't let me have either the coat, or nag,

without a deposit; besides, I must dine before I mount my steed, that I may not make a meagre and shabby appearance.

Fab. Very true; and as the profit will be principally to Sir James, I have no doubt that he will pay you handsomely.

Sir J. Certainly.—But I must request of you, Fab., for the moment, to make the advance; it happens unluckily that I am not so well provided with money as usual: my purse, you see, is not weighty.

Fab. Oh, there's enough to answer the present purpose.

Sir J. But you know I am to spend the day at Mr. Harley's, and as we shall probably play at cards in the evening, I should make a very ridiculous figure with no money to produce.

Fab. You forget your pocket book; you were looking it over as I came in, and it seemed full of notes.

Sir J. [*aside.*] I swear there's no getting out of his clutches. [*To Fabricio.*] Bless my soul; how stupid I am! I had indeed forgot my pocket-book; but that is poorly furnished; no more than two five-pound notes; 'pon honor, no more.

Fab. That will be sufficient for the present, won't it, Rimaldo?

Rim. Oh quite, I don't desire more, your honor.

Sir J. [*aside.*] I suppose they must be sacrificed. [*He takes out his pocket-book and gives the notes to Fabricio.*] Well, take them; I only hope that I may'nt want 'em myself.

Fab. [*To Rimaldo.*] Here, my good poet, Sir James presents you. [*He gives one of the notes into his left hand, and with his right gives the other to Rimaldo.*]

Rim. [*Perceiving what he has done.*] I am infinitely obliged to Sir James. Your hand, my dear Mr. Fabricio. [*Fabricio gives him the empty hand.*] The other hand, if you please; friends cannot shake hands too often.

Fab. [*Shifts the note and gives the other hand.*] No more trifling, my good Rimaldo. I must away to Mr. Harley's, get your dinner here, and I will contrive to remit you your instructions.

Rim. I shall certainly obey one part of the command at least with pleasure. But as we have shaken each hand

separately, do let us, before we part, shake both together.

Fab. With all my heart. [*He slides the note up within his coat sleeve, and then gives both hands to Rimaldo. The latter endeavours to withdraw the note, but does not succeed.*] And now farewell for the present. Sir James, you will accompany me, and we'll talk farther of our affairs, as we go to Mr. Harley's. Rimaldo, good morning.

Rim. Good morning, my worthy friend. Sir James, I am your most grateful humble servant. [*To Fabricio, in a half whisper, as he and Sir James go out.*] Mr. Jesuit, this is a most infamous plagiarism. [*Exeunt Sir James and Fabricio.*] And do not flatter yourself that it shall pass unpunished. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Saloon at* MR. HARLEY'S.

Enter MR. HARLEY, *with a letter in his hand.*

MR. HARLEY.

So, now the case is clear. Let me read Warren's letter once more. [*He reads.*] "My dear Sir—A very singular concurrence of circumstances has led me to a knowledge of the purpose for which Mr. Clermont wanted his money, and I am sorry to say, that it was to purchase the favors of an indigent and beautiful young woman, innocent till she knew him, but now, alas, innocent no more. I must defer particulars till I see you.

Your most obedient humble servant

Alexander Warren."

Who then is to be trusted in future? I thought this young man so steady, so discreet, never suspected him of the like propensities, never could have thought of his squandering away such a sum of money; a fifth part of his whole fortune. If I did myself now and then go astray in my youth, nobody can say that any of my indiscretions were so expensive. A hundred pounds at one time. Oh monstrous! [*He raises his voice as his anger increases.*

[Enter EMILY.]

Em. My dear papa, what can irritate you thus?

Mr. H. And with that cold and serious air of his, who should ever have suspected him of playing these sly tricks in a corner.

Em. Sly tricks in a corner. What can my papa mean?

Mr. H. [*Perceiving Emily.*] What do you want, child?

Em. Still angry with Mr. Clermont, papa?

Mr. H. Angry, or not, Miss Emily, what's that to you?

Em. Certainly, what Mr. Clermont does is no concern of mine; but I cannot help thinking, papa, that the money in question is devoted to some worthy purpose, and that you are in the wrong to be angry with him.

[Enter LUCY, *she stops behind* MR. HARLEY.]

Mr. H. I am in the wrong! Heyday! things are come to a fine pass indeed. I am in the wrong! a girl of eighteen tell her father that he is in the wrong! I suppose you and Mrs. Harley will put me on a backstring next.

Lu. [*Coming forward.*] Did you call, Sir?

Mr. H. No, Madam, I did not call, at least not for you, nor do I want your company.

Lu. Certainly, Mr. Clermont is one of the most discreetest, and most best young men in all London. [*Aside to Emily.*] He's now at the farm. [*Going on.*] and if he has spent a hundred pounds, 'tis for a good purpose, and they are wrong that are angry with him.

Mr. H. Mrs. Lucy, I'd have you to know, that notwithstanding your being such a favorite with Mrs. Harley and Miss Emily, if your tongue be suffered to run at such a rate, I shall soon let you see who is master in this house, by showing you the way out of it. As to you, Miss Emily, I desire I may never again catch you telling your father that he is in the wrong.

[Enter MR. FRANCIS.]

Mr. F. Why how now, cousin, in wrath with Emily?

Em. [*Aside to Mr. Francis.*] Say he is in the wrong.

Lu. [*Whispering on the other side.*] Say he is in the wrong.

Mr. F. [*Aside to them.*] I know nothing of the matter in debate, but I always do as the ladies bid me. [*To Mr. Harley.*] And after all, cousin, 'tis very likely you are in the wrong.

Mr. H. 'Sdeath! this is too much. I tell you he has squandered away a hundred pounds at one stroke.

Em. But for some worthy purpose, I have no doubt.

Mr. F. O, certainly, for some very worthy purpose.

Mr. H. And pray, Sir, who told you that it was for a worthy purpose?

Mr. F. Humph—humph—Miss Emily, cousin.

Mr. H. And pray, Miss Emily, who was your informer?

Em. Humph—humph—Lucy, papa.

Mr. H. And pray, Mrs. Lucy, how came you to be so extremely well informed on this matter?

Lu. Because, as I said before, Sir, Mr. Clermont is one of the most soberest, most discreetest, most prudentest young men in all London; and never makes a bad use of money.

Em. You see now, papa, that you are clearly in the wrong.

Lu. Oh! for that matter, certainly in the wrong.

Mr. F. 'Tis proved to a demonstration, you are undoubtedly in the wrong.

Mr. H. Sir, Miss, and you, Mrs. Abigail, I bow submissively to your superior judgment, and acknowledge myself in the wrong: and if you want another evidence on your side, here comes one who will readily swear to all that you choose to say, like you, without knowing a single circumstance of the matter. Mrs. Lucy, will you be so good as to favor us with your absence.

Lu. [*Aside to Emily.*] I'm going to the farm.

Em. [*Aside to Lucy.*] I'll follow as soon as I can get aw. [*Exit Lucy.*

[Enter Sir James O'Ryan.]

Sir J. Good morning my dear Mr. Harley. How goes the world with you? Well and hearty, as usual? How does Mrs. Harley? A most charming woman that, I must say, though she is my relation. Mr. Francis, your most obedient. Miss Emily——Oh! shameful, that I should address myself the last to you; but though last, not least in love. I heard of you last night at the play; they say you eclipsed all the belles in the theatre. Indeed, Mr. Harley, I don't know a man so deserving of envy as you are; such a wife, such a daughter.

Mr. H. Yes; Emily is in the main a good girl, though just at this moment——

Sir J. And Mrs. Harley. Such a woman! Fain would have had her myself. But she was cruel: had seen Mr. Harley, and then poor I was quite despised. Lucky for you my dear Sir,—a high prize in the matrimonial lottery—every thing that can be desired in a wife,—beauty, elegance, taste, science.

Mr. H. Which taste and science drain my coffers damnably.

Sir J. Trifles, my dear friend, mere trifles. You are rich; and to what purpose are riches, but to pay our court to the ladies. You have, I repeat it, a most charming wife. You love her, she loves you; and, to perpetuate this happy harmony between you, you have only to be always gallant, always generous.

Mr. F. And to pay all her bills.

Sir J. I rejoice, my dear Sir, to find that you have so just a way of thinking; and I dare say the doctrine is not displeasing to Miss Emily. Happy the man who shall be permitted to devote his whole fortune to her service! Are you not again of my opinion, Mr. Francis!

Mr. F. Perfectly so. No one can know Miss Emily, and not think that the man, whose homage shall be accepted by her, will be blessed above the common lot of mortals.

Em. Indeed, gentlemen——

Mr. H. Come along, Emily, this nonsense is neither good for you or me to hear. Cousin Francis, that a parcel of empty butterflies should flutter round young girls, and [fill th]eir heads with nonsense, 'tis well; 'tis their trade; but you, a man of sense, with fifty-six years over your head, might know a little better. If, however, you must talk in this strain, here comes one who will listen to it with greater pleasure, and whom I cannot pretend to control.

[*Exit with Emily.*

Sir J. [*Aside.*] A slap in the face for me, but I'm not to be repulsed by trifles.

Mr. F. [*Aside.*] Mrs. Harley and Fabricio! I may gain some ideas by remaining. [*He follows Mr. Harley and Emily, and after staying a few moments, returns. He sits down by a table, which is at the back of the scene, takes*

up a book that lies upon it, and remains there during the rest of the scene, appearing as if he paid no attention to the others, while they pay none to him.]

[Enter Mrs. Harley and Fabricio.

Mrs. H. How's this, Sir James? Have you frightened away my husband and Miss Emily? Mr. Harley seemed to go off in wrath.

Sir J. Indeed, I can't imagine what offended him so much. Mr. Francis and I were paying such compliments to Miss Emily as her transcendent merit deserves, when all on a sudden Mr. Harley led her away, giving us both a pretty sharp rebuke.

Mrs. H. It was *your* compliments, Sir James, that disconcerted him; for, to tell you the truth, he is by no means disposed to enter into our views with regard to Emily. But do not be discouraged: I have determined that she shall be your's; and he shall find that, though a woman, I can be as resolute as himself.

Sir J. Transporting sounds! Thus, thus let me thank you, my dear cousin. (*Takes her hand, and kisses it eagerly.*)

Mrs. H. Harley has indeed met with several things put him out of sorts this morning. He was not much pleased with some little bills of mine that were brought in; and something, I know, besides, has ruffled him, in which Mr. Clermont is concerned.

Sir J. Clermont, an insolent puppy. I think he ruffles every body.

Mrs. H. Ruffles every body? What do you mean, Sir James?

Sir J. Oh! a trifle, Madam, a mere trifle, unworthy of attention.

Mrs. H. Why then such warmth of expression?

Sir J. Indeed—indeed—it was not a trifle; and since I have inadvertently gone so far, I had better, perhaps, go farther, lest worse than the truth should be suspected.

Mrs. H. You keep me on the rack, Sir James.

Sir J. Nay then, I must make my confession. The other day, I was taking a glass of ice at a confectioner's in Bond Street, when, who should come in but Mr. Clermont, with a lady very elegantly dressed, hanging upon his arm.

Mrs. H. Some drab, I suppose, whom he had picked up in the street.

Sir J. Even so: it wasn't the first time I had seen her. Mr. Clermont accosted me, as he always does wherever we meet, to give himself an air of consequence, as if he were connected with persons of fashion; and, by way of showing off his wit, began sneering at the essay on craniology, which you, my dear Madam, had been so good as to read to us the evening before; that charming one, I mean, which you are writing yourself, and which I so much admired.

Mrs. H. Oh! you are so candid, Sir James. But pray what did Mr. Clermont say?

Sir J. Excuse me, Madam, I wouldn't for worlds repeat such impertinence.

Mrs. H. Oh! I insist upon hearing.

Sir J. Nay, now, my dear cousin.

Mrs. H. Speak, if you do not mean to offend me yourself.

Sir J. Well, then, he said the only thing to be collected from the essay was, that the author of it must have a very empty cranium herself.

Mrs. H. I thank you, Sir James. I am satisfied. After this, it is not all the husbands in the world that shall ever make me endure his company again. 'Tis not that I am piqued at his impertinence. I despise it too much to be hurt; but I think it my duty, as a member of society, not to let it pass unchastised.

Sir J. You certainly, my dear Madam, take a very just view of the matter.

Mrs. H. I will instantly give orders that he never again be admitted within my doors.

Sir J. Indeed I must own, setting aside the matter in question, that I always thought Mr. Harley showed very little feeling of what was due to a woman of your rank in admitting one of his clerks to visit at his house upon such a friendly footing.

Mrs. H. I have often remonstrated with him on the great distinction shown to this Clermont above all his other clerks in the intimate footing upon which he was permitted to visit here. But Harley always talked of his friend Everard, and the great respect he had for his mem-

ory, of the young man's friendless and unprotected state, with many other such common-place excuses. *(Mr. Francis starts at the latter end of this speech, and seems particularly attentive to what is passing.)*

Sir J. If he be friendless and unprotected, we may be pretty sure that 'tis not without some fault of his own.

Mrs. H. But I am determined to submit no longer. It is time that I exert my authority, and Harley shall see that there is a point beyond which submission cannot be carried.—Gentlemen, will you accompany me to seek him? [*Exeunt Mrs. Harley, Sir James, and Fabricio.*

Mr. F. (*coming forward.*) Upon my word, a most edifying conversation, the ultimate bent of which is easily seen. Sir James aspires to the hand of my fair cousin Emily, he thinks Mr. Clermont an obstacle to his wishes, and is determined, if possible, to ruin him with the family. My love to thee, my sweet girl, shall be otherwise employed—I will endeavour to discover the real character of this Clermont, and if he be deserving of thee, his want of fortune shall be no obstacle to thy happiness. I must question Mr. Harley too on the subject, the name of Everard connected with him has raised strange ideas in mind.—Mrs. Harley talked of his friendless and unprotected youth—should he prove the person I seek, Oh Emily, what an additional stimulus would this be to my exertions in the promotion of your wishes. [*Exit.*

[Enter LUCY, *looking about.*]

Lu. Where can my young lady and Mr. Clermont be? Thompson told me they were gone together to the house, and that he had heard Mr. Clermont talk of having business of importance with Mr. Harley. I must see them, if possible, before they be separated, and endeavour to spirit them up to an elopement; I shall never be easy about Warren till Miss Emily is out of his reach, and then we can easily cram him with excuses.— But here they come.

[Enter EMILY *with* CLERMONT.]

Em. Indeed, Mr. Clermont, I had hoped that you would spend the day with us. Though my father is displeased at what has happened, yet I think a satisfactory explanation would soon appease his anger, and you assure

me that you can give him an explanation with which he must be satisfied.

Cler. Of that, my dearest girl, you may be well assured—as to remaining here for the day, my Emily knows, that to be often with her, is the most eager wish of my heart; that to pass my whole life with her I should esteem the height of all human happiness; she will therefore readily believe, that nothing but an affair of great importance makes me desirous of returning to London, as soon as I have spoken with Mr. Harley.

Lu. If you would take my advice, this very important affair would be adjourned till to-morrow. Believe me, you have no affair so important at this moment as to remain with Miss Emily.

Em. I have indeed great occasion for your company to relieve me from the fatiguing and fulsome assiduities of Sir James.

Cler. Well then, I will dispatch a note to put off my business in town, and will have the happiness of remaining here. But is it possible, my Emily, that Mrs. Harley can think of throwing you away on Sir James O'Ryan?

Em. That such is her intention, I cannot doubt. Happily, however, her power over me is not unlimited. Though she may win my father to her views, yet as the large fortune which I inherited from my mother is absolutely my own, I have nothing to fear on that account.

Cler. To injure you essentially may not be in her power, yet she may occasion you great uneasiness and vexation, of which I shall be the cause—that thought rends my soul. Besides, I have such obligations to Mr. Harley that I cannot bear the idea of being, however innocently, the occasion of trouble to him.

Lu. That's all very fine, but 'tis not the way to prevent Sir James's being forced upon Miss Emily.

Em. It must, however, be Miss Emily's own fault, if she submits to have him forced upon her.

Lu. That's very easily said—but then follows vexation upon vexation, persecution upon persecution, and who knows where it may end at last. In short, if you would be happy, there is but one path to follow.

Cler. Accuse not my heart, dearest Emily, if I appear cold and backward to assert the claim which your generous

preference gives me. My wish only is, before I declare myself openly, to be able to prove, that by birth and education, I am not unworthy of the honor to which I aspire. These proofs I have endeavoured to obtain, and wait but the possession of them to lay open to Mr. Hailey the sentiments of my soul.

Em. Believe me, Mr. Clermont, though for my father's satisfaction, I may wish you to obtain these proofs, yet they can never influence my own sentiments. 'Tis the amiable qualities of your heart and mind that I esteem and value: they are such as, I am persuaded will insure the happiness of all connected with them, and what are birth and fortune, compared with such qualities?

Cler. My generous, generous Emily!— But there is one thing more which I would say.—Born amid the smiles of fortune, I have been long the victim of her frowns, and whether she again will smile upon me is a problem yet to be solved.

Em. Think not of that—fortune has been more kind to me, and I thank heaven that 'tis in my power to repair her injustice to you.

Lu. This is what we call speaking plainly on both sides, and it emboldens me to speak as plainly. The proofs of your illustrious birth, and liberal education, Mr. Clermont, are not yet in your possession, and if they were, believe me they would stand for exactly nothing in the eyes of Mr. Hailey, unless accompanied with proofs of an illustrious fortune.

Em. Indeed, Mr. Clermont, I am afraid that Lucy is in the right. What then is to be done?

Lu. That question is very easily answered. Mr. Clermont must make up his mind to run away with Miss Emily, and Miss Emily must make up her mind to be run away with by Mr. Clermont.

Cler. Hold, Lucy, nor suppose that I will ever render myself thus criminal! No, while I feel that my happiness depends on the possession of my Emily, yet never will I seek that happiness by any means which honor and principle cannot justify.

Lu. Very fine sentiments indeed, and exactly such as Sir James could wish in a rival.

Em. Indeed, Mr. Clermont, I admire—I very much

admire—I say I very much admire the elevation of your sentiments; they speak, they speak indeed a truly noble mind; but—but

John. Madam, madam, here's the devil to pay; my mistress has just been giving orders never again to admit Mr. Clermont into the house.

Cler. Never to admit me?

Em. Never to admit Mr. Clermont.

John. Even so, Madam: and I am charged with giving the order to the other servants. [*Exit hastily.*

Em. Very well, Mrs. Harley; this is an affront aimed directly at me, since you have often insinuated that you suspected Mr. Clermont's company to be very agreeable to me. But have a care, Madam, you may perhaps find, that in shutting your doors on Mr. Clermont, you have opened them to some other.

Lu. Aye, that's speaking with some spirit; and Mr. Clermont, perhaps, may not now be so very averse to an elopement.

Cler. You mistake, Lucy: less than ever would I at this moment think of such a thing. My honor is attacked, and I must demand an explanation of such treatment. Assured of the heart of my Emily, can I be too anxious to prove myself worthy of it?

Lu. I swear the man's quite fatiguing with his sentiments.

Em. What did you say, Lucy?

Lu. That I'm sure there's a finger of Fabricio's in this pye.

Em. Oh! was that all? But here comes Mrs Harley. Excuse me, Mr. Clermont, if I take my leave. I am so indignant at this step, that I dare not at present trust myself to meet her. Come, Lucy. [*Exit, with Lucy.*

Cler. This affair must be thoroughly investigated.

Enter Mrs. HARLEY, *Sir* JAMES, *and* FABRICIO.

Mrs. H. [*Speaking as she enters.*] Let us see whether my sweet husband be here. [*She sees Clermont.*] How! Mr. Clermont here? Had my orders, Sir, been more punctually executed, I had been spared the humiliation of this meeting: the mortification of being myself obliged to command you instantly to quit this house, and never to think of entering it again.

Cler. If I merited such treatment, Madam, I should obey in silence: but since I am incapable of any thought or action which can reflect dishonor upon me, or render me unworthy of your society, I have a right (the right that conscious innocence gives to every one unjustly stigmatised) to demand why I am thus treated.

Fab. [*Half aside to Mrs. Harley*] Assuredly, if great words could atone a great affront, that which you have experienced, Madam, is atoned.

Mrs. H. Unjustly stigmatised! I thought, Sir, I was doing you a favor in relieving you from the painful necessity of sometimes passing a few heavy hours in the society of one whose cranium is too empty to be fit company for a person of your taste and accomplishments.

Cler. [*Looking significantly at Sir James.*] I understand the nature of my offence at present; but I would advise gentlemen, who meddle with relating in one company what they hear in another, to take care not to misrepresent circumstances. [*To Mrs. Harley.*] It is true Madam—

Fab. [*To Mrs. Harley.*] You forget, Madam, that our business with Mr. Harley is urgent. Shall we proceed to seek him———

Mrs. H. Justly observed. [*To Clermont.*] Any explanation, Sir, would be superfluous. I am perfectly conscious of my insignificance in your eyes: but I shall show you that I am at least of consequence somewhere, by taking care that my insignificance shall never again be exposed to your animadversions. [*She gives her hand to Fabricio, and they go out together. Sir James is following, when Clermont stops him.*]

Cler. You, Sir, shall soon be convinced that a clerk in a compting-house may be a man of honor, as well as a baronet. perhaps the man of more honor of the two. That he has sentiments enough to despise treachery and calumny, and courage enough to chastise the calumniator.

Sir J. I have no doubt, Sir, of your honor, your courage, or your sentiment; but on the eve of an union with Miss Emily, my life is too precious to run any foolish hazard with it, and so adieu. [*Exit.*

Cler. An union with Miss Emily! Yes, here is the

due to all. Dazzled with the idea of possessing her fortune, though insensible to the charms of her mind, Sir James dares aspire to the honor of obtaining her hand, and considering me as an obstacle to his wishes, seeks to blacken and defame my character, in order to ruin me with this family. Yet I will persevere in the path which honor points out, trusting in Heaven at length for my reward. But now to seek Mr. Harley, The unworthy treatment I have received from his wife, shall not prevent my communicating to him the discoveries I have made relative to the iniquitous conduct of his partner, Mr. Warren. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Emily's Dressing Room.*
Enter EMILY *and* LUCY.

Lu. Well, now, Madam, have I any penetration or not, Havn't I always said how it would be?—That Mrs. Harley would never rest till she play'd Mr. Clermont some bad turn, because she considers him as Sir James's rival.

Em. Indeed, Lucy, I am so indignant at my mother-in-law's behaviour, that there is scarcely any thing Mr. Clermont could propose, to which I would not consent, merely to be revenged on her. But where is Mr. Clermont, Lucy? Not returned to London, I hope?

Lu. I believe not, Madam: I fancy he's only gone back to the farm.

Em. Then seek him instantly, and tell him I will contrive to see him this evening. Say, that I want very much to have some further conversation with him. That if he has any thing to propose——And Lucy, give him this.

[*Gives her a picture.*

Lu. Oho! your picture: that is sufficiently significant; and if he does not now——

Enter JOHN.

John. Madam, here's Mr. Warren coming up stairs, and he says he must and will see you. I can't imagine what he has got into his head: but he made such a bothering below, that there was no denying him; so I hastened to tell you. [*Aside to Lucy.*] What shall we do? All will come out.

Lu. [*Aside to John.*] Only a little presence of mind.

Em. Nor can I indeed imagine what he has got into his

head; but this I know, that I am not in the least inclined to attend to any thing such an animal can have to say; and so, Lucy, I shall leave you to entertain him. [*Exit.*

John. Thank heaven! thank heaven! I did'nt hope to come off so well.

[Enter WARREN.]

War. Ha! can it be! Emily quits the room as I enter it. Lucy, what am I to understand from this?—how am I to reconcile these contradictions? Absent, Emily always appears anxious to see me, yet the moment I appear she shuns me.

Lu. And serve you right. What business had you to thrust yourself upon her in this abrupt and indiscreet manner, bawling so that all the house might hear you, when she wants the affair to remain a secret.

War. Oh, Lucy, it was excess of love that urged me on. But since cruel fate still denies a personal interview, be this once more the medium of our communication. [*Gives her a letter.*] Take this letter, Lucy, it has been written ever since I quitted the house some hours ago. You did not come for it as you had promised, and that determined me on the present attempt. Give it to my Emily, Lucy, I will go myself to Farmer Thompson's, and there wait for the answer.

John. [*Aside to Lucy.*] The devil! and Clermont is there.

War. Or rather, Lucy, try and persuade Emily to grant me an interview at the farm, though it should be but for a few short moments.

Lu. That I'm sure will be impossible. Besides don't go to the farm; the farmer's little girl is an imp of mischief, both for inquisitiveness and babbling; she'll be asking you a thousand questions, and every word she hears will be repeated again among the maids in our kitchen.

War. Never fear me—I shall be upon my guard.

Lu. [*Showing John the picture.*] What shall we do to get rid of the fellow? I've a good mind——

John. [*Aside to Lucy.*] Give it to him for heaven's sake, and send him packing.

Lu. [*Giving Warren the picture.*] Well, go, go to the plough, and wait there quietly till I can come to you

And see what a sugar plumb here is to keep you company.

War. Her picture! oh heavens! did she really send it to me, Lucy?

Lu. To be sure: who else should?

War. Then I can no longer doubt her love, nor fear the failure of my present project. Hasten, Lucy, hasten to give her my letter,—hasten to bring me her answer. I am on the rack till I receive it. And thou sweet emblem, rest thou here, near to the heart whose pride it is to adore thy sweet original. Or, Lucy, to save trouble, if in two hours I do not see you, I will conclude that Emily consents to crown my wishes, and proceed accordingly. [*Exit.*

Lu. Thank heaven! we are happily rid of him at last.

John. I swear I sweated at every pore.

Lu. And now to read the letter. Oh heaven's! 'tis to propose an elopement, and that, this very night.

John. Then we are in a fine scrape indeed, Mrs. Lucy.

Lu. And who but yourself is to be thanked for it? But 'tis not now a time to reproach each other, or to stand gaping and hesitating about the matter, our business is to prevent the consequences of this new fancy. Haste then, run after the animal, say that 'tis absolutely impossible and impracticable, for my mistress to comply with his proposal—say that she's suddenly taken ill—or that her father begins to smoke the secret, and has locked her up—say, in short, any thing you can think of, to prevent his thinking of this plan any more.

John. A fine kettle of fish 'twould make, were he to arrive with his post chaise and four, and all the apparatus of an elopement—an explanation must take place, and in that case, my sweet Mrs. Lucy, where are some folks?

Lu. Get along, get you gone, and hasten to prevent him. [*She pushes John out, and follows herself.*]

SCENE III. MR. HARLEY's *dressing room.*

MR. HARLEY, MR. FRANCIS, and FABRICIO.

Fab. Yes, indeed, Sir, it is scandalous that this young man, who owes you such numberless obligations, should turn Mrs. Harley into ridicule in all companies, and you cannot do less than unite with her in banishing him your house for ever.

Mr. H. He deserves to be banished: a hundred pounds at one stroke.

Fab. Ridicule the wife of his patron.

Mr. H. Squander it on a——but I'll endeavour to think no more about it.

Fab. And ridicule her before her own relations.

Mr. H. When I hardly supposed he knew that such kind of women existed.

Fab. Insolence! an empty skull indeed.

Mr. H. Extravagance! a whole hundred pounds!

Mr. F. Gentlemen, when you have rung changes sufficiently on your respective subjects of offence, I will crave permission to put in a word, and observe, that, after all, Mr. Clermont is condemned, you know not why, since you will not hear his justification. [*Aside to Fab.*] For you, Sir, there is no occasion to feel your cranium in order to be assured of what is passing within it.

Fab. [*aside*] Your's, Sir, may perhaps be made to answer this.

Mr. H. Aye, it becomes you well, cousin Francis, with your fifty-six years over your head, to be always taking the part of the young people. But, as the proverb says, a grey head is often placed on green shoulders.

Mr. F. My dear Sir, they are not always the wisest who make the greatest parade with their wisdom.

Fab. I did not indeed expect Mr. Francis to become the champion of ingratitude; nor can I conceive how even the most refined logic can find a good excuse for Mr. Clermont's conduct; or a good motive for his prodigality.

Mr. F. Till I am assured, Sir, that Mr. Clermont has acted from bad motives, I am justified in supposing that he may have acted from good ones; and you, yourself, must have had sufficient experience in the world to know that the more pure we are in our own heart, the less are we inclined to suspect the integrity of others.

Fab. If I were less conscious, Sir, of the integrity of my heart, my feelings might be wounded by your insinuations; but, fenced with virtue, the bosom can repel the sharpest arrows. [*To Mr. Harley.*] I have acquitted myself of my commission, Sir, and I go to render an account of it to Mrs. Harley. [*Exit.*

Mr. F. Your most humble servant. I am much mistaken, or Integrity here plays a very dishonest part.

Mr. H. [*Calling after Fabricio.*] Mr. Fabricio, you may tell all my people never to admit Mr. Clermont again into the house.

Mr. F. Excuse me, cousin, but you here pronounce your own condemnation. To disgrace a man unheard, is, in all cases, an act of high injustice; but it becomes doubly unjust when the object is one placed under our especial care and protection; and such, if I am not misinformed, is the case with regard to this young man.

Mr. H. No, hold, not quite so fast, if you please. He never was placed under my especial care and protection.

Mr. F. Am I wrong then?—I understood Mr. Clermont to be a friendless and unprotected young man, bequeathed to your care by your deceased friend, Mr. Everard.

Mr. H. Everard, my friend, received him as clerk in his house, at the recommendation of his brother, the banker at Madras, whom you probably know.

Mr. F. Extremely well, and value him very highly.

Mr. H. Mr. Everard of Madras, mentioned him as being unfortunate, friendless, and deserted. This was enough to awaken my friend's benevolence: he was like a father to him while he lived, and dying, recommended him to me, leaving him a legacy of five hundred pounds. I was then in want of a clerk, so took him into my compting-house, and for Everard's sake I have always treated him with a particular distinction.

Mr. F. Extraordinary! and how long has he been with you?

Mr. H. Two years.

Mr. F. And he was with Mr. Everard?

Mr. H. Five years.

Mr. F. What do you suppose his age may be?

Mr. H. About five and twenty. Methinks, Coz., you are very inquisitive about this Mr. Clermont.

Mr. F. (*talking to himself*) 'Tis indeed surprising—all agrees so well—Oh if it should be he! My dear Cousin, you interest me deeply in this young man's behalf, and I hasten to seek him: fain would I hear from his own mouth———

Mr. H. Well, well, you are right, Coz.—and if he can clear himself, you may revoke—but then Mrs. Harley, what will she say?—yet I've as good a right to my way as she to her's: so I give you leave, Cousin, to make any inquiries you please into Mr. Clermont's conduct.

Mr. F. A commission which I shall execute with the utmost pleasure. *(Aside)* But first I must see Emily. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. And somehow I can't help wishing that he may be able to clear up every thing. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The Saloon.*

Enter MR. FRANCIS and EMILY.

Mr. F. My sweet Emily, I rejoice to find you here alone, as I much wish for a few moments' private conversation with you. It is not to press a suit which I fear is disagreeable to my lovely girl; though my pretensions may be honored with Mr. Harley's approbation, yet, if my Emily's heart cannot confirm her father's choice, far be from me the ungenerous idea of urging them farther.

Em. Excellent man!—Oh! moment of severe trial!—

Mr. F. You are moved, my Emily;—recollect that before I professed myself your lover, I was honored with being called your friend—and if, as I much fear, your heart be already engaged to another, the more aspiring hopes I dared to entertain are solemnly renounced. Yet I must still entreat to be considered as your friend; and, under that title, must claim permission to employ all the means within my power for promoting your union with the object of your choice.

Em. What magnanimity!

Mr. F. Then I am answered;—no more a lover, all I entreat is the confidence, the frankness, the sincerity, that a friend may be allowed to claim.

Em. Which shall be truly your's.—Yes, my most esteemed, my most revered, my most respected of friends, to you my inmost soul shall be revealed.

Mr. F. Honored, flattered, beyond expression, with the title of your friend, I will endeavour to prove myself worthy of it. Mr. Clermont—am I not right?

[MR. HARLEY *appears peeping in at the door.*

Mr. H. Aha, my cousin and Emily together, and the girl blushing;—this looks well.

Mr. F. That blush, that downcast look, are my sufficient answers, and I shall proceed accordingly. But, hold, any farther conversation on the subject must be deferred, for see, at present we are interrupted.

Mr. H. *(at the door.)* This is devilish unlucky—they seemed going on full drive, and here comes Mrs. Harley, and her two precious satellites to interrupt them. I may as well therefore show myself. *(He comes forward.)* Beg pardon for breaking in at such an interesting moment.—Are all things settled—when are we to have the wedding?

Enter MRS. HARLEY, SIR JAMES, and FABRICIO.

Fab. [*Aside to Sir James as they enter.*] The critical moment is at hand, 'tis near five o'clock, and Rimaldo will soon be here.

Mrs. H. [*To Mr. Harley.*] Since there is nothing in the world, my dear husband, in general less volatile, less irregular in its motions than yourself, how happens it that, though I have been seeking you a whole half hour, you have constantly escaped me.

Mr. H. Seeking me!—Upon my word that's an event that deserves to be noted—'tis the first time since I had the happiness of calling you wife, that I have been so honored.

Mrs. H. It is not now a question, my love, to enter into a war of wits; and, if it were, I should expect it to be carried on with somewhat more politeness. At present I come to talk with you on a very serious and important affair.

Mr. H. And I must talk with you upon an affair so very serious, so very important, that a man would do well to consider all his life before he engages in it.

Fab. [*Aside to Sir James.*] Rimaldo comes not—where can he be?— [*He goes to the window.*

Mrs. H. And pray what is this very important affair?

Mr. H. That bashful look of Emily's, that air of inward restraint explain it. They announce that she has just accepted the homage of our cousin, Francis, whom I have chosen as her husband.

Mrs. H. Rather say they indicate her decided preference for Sir James O'Ryan, whom *I* have chosen for her husband.

Mr. F. Say rather that they imply a renunciation of both, since she has not herself chosen either as her husband.

Fab. *(Aside)* The clock is on the stroke of five, and Rimaldo not arrived. *(He slides out unobserved.*

Mr. H. Not so fast;—Emily knows her duty better than to refuse the husband of her father's choice.

Mrs. H. She has too much good sense to reject the addresses of a man of rank.

John. *(Without.)* I tell you, you may put the clock back as much as you please; 'tis past five by my stomach, and that's never mistaken in the hour.

Enter John, Fabricio *following him.*

Mr. H. Well, what's the matter now?

John. Mr. Fabricio, Sir, insists upon it, that 'tis not yet five; and wants to prevent my announcing that dinner's upon table.

Mr. H. *(To Fab.)* Kind Sir, if, contrary to your usual custom, you are not hungry to-day yourself, we should be much obliged to you at least not to prevent those that are so from sitting down to table.

[*At this moment* Rimaldo *enters hastily, dressed in a fantastic livery, with large mustachios, and otherwise disguised When he is in the midst of the circle, he pauses, and looks round upon them all.*]

Fab. *(Aside.)* Thank heaven, I am revenged; he could not come more opportunely.

Mr. H. Who the devil have we here?—What do you want, Sirrah?

Rim. No sirrah, Sir, if you please, but the valet of a fair lady come on an important errand. I am charged by my mistress to deliver this letter into no other hands than those of ——— of ——— *(He looks round on all the company, then goes up to Fabricio, and gives him a letter, the direction of which is turned downwards.)* of this gentleman, as I presume.—I am in haste, excuse me, ladies and gentlemen. *(He makes a profound bow and exit.*

Fab. Charged by his mistress! *(To Mrs. Harley.*

Then, Madam, it may probably be tidings of the bust.

Mrs. H. Oh! charming—and I hope to hear that we may expect it soon.

Fab. (*Opens the letter and begins to read without looking at the direction.*) "I have a thousand reproaches to make you"—

Mrs. H. Reproaches!—how reproaches?—

Fab. (*Reading.*) "Come and receive them.—You send a hundred pounds, 'tis true, to your beloved, but what is that in comparison of the ecstasies she enjoys in your company, yet you have suffered two whole days to pass without seeing her."

Mrs. H. Bless me, this surely cannot relate to the bust.

Fab. Indeed I think not, Madam, nor can I well conceive to what it does relate—there surely must be some mistake—I am really not conscious of deserving these reproaches from any lady. (*He turns the letter and looks at the direction.*) A mistake, indeed. I ought, undoubtedly, to have looked at the direction before I opened the letter; but, prepossessed with the idea of its bringing tidings of the bust, that never occurred to me. I have thus been inadvertently led into a piracy; for the letter is not to me, but to Mr. Clermont. (*Showing the direction to Mrs. Harley.*)

Mrs. H. It is, indeed: the direction is very clear and full: To Mr. Clermont, at Mr. Harley's.

Emily. (*Aside.*) Oh heavens! what can this mean!— (*Sir James and Fabricio examine her attentively, and then exchange significant looks with one another.*)

Mr. F. To Mr. Clermont! I will know the bottom of this. The servant shall be examined. (*He rings the bell.*)

Fab. A singular mistake. Who should have thought of a billet-doux to Mr. Clermont falling into my hands.

[Enter JOHN.]

Mr. F. Cannot you recal the servant who brought that letter, I wish to speak with him.

John. He is still in the house, Sir.

Mr. F. Then desire him to come in. (*Exit John.*)

Mr. H. After all I am afraid that Warren was not mistaken.

Mrs. H. I suppose this was the lady you saw with him, Sir James.

Sir. J. No doubt, Madam.—*(To Fabricio.)* But come, Fab. as you have already poached a little, you may as well give us the whole of the letter.

Mrs. H. O yes! pray let us have it.

Fab. *(Reads)* "If you expect to be pardoned, come without fail this evening to render an account of your conduct. Are you making craniological experiments upon the empty head of your female pedant—or listening to the pathetic lamentations of the poor hen-pecked husband?"

Mr. F. By what right, gentlemen, do you read this letter, which you know belongs to another?

Sir J. My dear Mr. Francis, you are so very squeamish.—

Mr. H. Pray let us hear the whole; I should like to know how far her insolence can go.

Mrs. H. And I would not for worlds lose any remark she may have to make upon the female pedant.

Emily. *(aside)* This is insupportable.

Fab. *(still reading.)* "Or are you breathing out ardent vows of unalterable fidelity at the feet of my too credulous rival? Yet remember, my dear Charles, that how much soever I may wish to see you possessed of her fortune, while I alone possess your heart—remember, I say, that your lengthened absence plants daggers in the breast of your faithful MATHILDA."

Em. *(aside.)* Am I awake, or do my ears deceive me!

Re-enter JOHN with RIMALDO.

Mr. F. Why did you bring this letter here?

Rim. Because when I enquired at the counting-house for Mr. Clermont, they told me he was here, and I was strictly charged by my mistress not to deliver it into any hands but his own.

Mr. F. Methinks, then, before you delivered it into the hands of any one, you should have been assured that you were addressing yourself to the right person.—That gentleman is not Mr. Clermont.

Rim. I beg his honor's pardon, if I have made a mistake. Indeed I must confess, that I was rather at a loss to guess which was the gentleman, since no body present answered exactly to the description my Mistress gave of his person.

Mr. H. She told you, perhaps, that he was young and handsome.

Rim. Since your honor presses me so hard, I must confess that 'twas even so.

Mr. H. What then led you to present the letter to this gentleman?

Rim. A certain roguish look about the eye, which seemed to say that he was not averse to a little bit of an intrigue, and though I did not think him either *very* young or *very* handsome, yet love, we all know, is *very* blind. But excuse me, Sir, I am your most obedient humble servant; I am in a prodigious hurry, and must away this instant. [*Aside as he goes out.*] I think now I am even with Fabricio. [*Exit.*

Em. [*aside.*] Ah wretched, wretched Emily!

Mrs. H. You seem distressed, Miss Emily; does the credulous rival touch too nearly?

Em. [*aside.*] I cannot stay to hear these taunts. [*To the company.*] Excuse me, I am not well. [*Exit.*

Mr. F. [*aside.*] There is more in this than appears upon the surface, and I will know the whole truth.—But first I must seek and console my poor afflicted Emily. [*Exit.*

Mrs. H. Who will now say, that I was not well inspired when I ordered my doors to be shut on such a man. This discovery is indeed most fortunate, and I flatter myself, that Emily will now renounce an attachment which degrades her, and accept a match that will do her honor. Let us hasten to seek her, 'tis an important moment.

Mr. H. Let us dine first, and then we can arrange our future plans over the bottle. [*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The Saloon.*

Enter JOHN *and* LUCY.

John. Faith, the arrival of this brother of the livery was a lucky chance for us, we should else have been puzzled to get the letter conveyed to Warren.

Lu. Are you sure that he will deliver it?

John. Never fear. I wrote on the outside that Mr.

Warren was desired to pay the bearer handsomely, so you may depend on his punctuality. And now, child, tell me what you said; I am afraid, as I was not by to dictat—

Lu. Oh you may be perfectly easy, it was as pretty a letter as if it had been every word your own. I said—but hush, here comes poor Miss Emily. She takes on so about this Mr. Clermont, that I declare it makes one quite melancholy to see her. [*Exit John.*

[Enter EMILY.]

Em. Ah Clermont, cruel, cruel Clermont, how have you deceived, and what torments do you occasion me! You would force my heart to hate you; well then, you are obeyed, it hates, yes, it detests you.

Lu. Be comforted, I entreat you, Madam; the wretch is unworthy of your tears, he deserves nothing but contempt.

Em. With what consummate art did he insinuate himself into my affections! Who could have thought that such gentleness, such mildness, were but masks worn to conceal a depraved and profligate mind! 'Tis evident now why he was so eager to return home this morning; he had been too long absent from his Mathilda.

Lu. 'Tis the last time, however, that any one here will want to detain him from his Mathilda.

Em. Never, no never, will I see him more. Haste, Lucy, to the farm, if he be still there, tell him that he is discovered, that I know all; that the blackness of his heart, the treachery of his proceedings are detected, and henceforward he is a stranger to me. Tell him that I demand of him again my letters and the picture, or, perhaps, Lucy, you may not yet have given him the picture.

Lu. Oh yes, Ma'am. John was going to the farm, so as I didn't know when I might be able to go myself, I sent it by him.

Em. Then you cannot say how he received it.

Lu. No, indeed, for I hav'nt had an opportunity of asking John, but I dare say he pretended to be in transports.

Em. False dissembler! Go, Lucy, demand the picture again, see if he will carry his hypocrisy so far as to pretend reluctance to resign it.

Lu. That you may be sure he will, for I see he's a deep one.

Em. Or—no; Lucy I will write to him once more; will upbraid him with his falsehood; who can speak in terms so forcible, as one so deeply, deeply injured? I will tell him to be gone from a spot which is contaminated by his longer stay; will tell him that every moment he remains near me aggravates my wrongs, and increases the indignation I feel at his baseness and perfidy. [*Exit.*

Lu. Ah! my dear mistress, I am afraid there's a little bit of lingering love at the bottom of all this contempt and indignation. And what are we to do now, I can no longer recommend an elopement with Mr. Clermont; I must take Mr. Francis's part, I think, in hopes of putting her out of Warren's reach. But mercy on me, what figure have we here?

Enter RIMALDO *in his poet's garb,* JOHN *following him.*

John. I beg to know what your impertinence means, Sir, by running into a house without knocking at the door, ringing at the bell, or asking leave of any body.

Rim. When I find a door open, I always conclude that there's no occasion to knock.

John. And are you never afraid that for want of knocking you may some day be knocked down yourself?

Rim. I come, Sir, if you please, to solicit a moment's audience of Mrs. Harley.

John. You will please, I suppose, first to tell us your name, whence you come, and under what capacity you are to be announced, whether as master or servant, tradesman or gentleman, for indeed your appearance is so extraordinary, that there's no guessing to what class of beings you belong. Probably you're a miser, for that coat's too shabby for any thing else to wear.

Rim. As to my name, Sir, I am called Rimaldo; not that this is literally and truly either my baptismal or my family name,—'tis one which the chances of my life have fixed upon me. As to my rank, I am both master and servant. I am master of myself, and servant to nine charming maiden sisters, who are extremely well known in the polished world. Not a servant of your description: observe, the ladies I serve are of a rank so distinguished that in serving them we ennoble ourselves.

John. You have not however either a very noble, or a

very distinguished air; and if you are master of yourself, we may safely say that you are master of a very miserable property. Ha! ha! ha!

Lu. If you have nine mistresses, none of them have thought proper to give us a very magnificent idea of your wardrobe. Ha! ha! ha!

Rim. Good cloaths, Madam, serve sometimes as a mask to conceal the little-worth heart within, while a humble garb is often a veil to the most transcendent merit.

John. As you would politely insinuate, is the case at present. But if I am not mistaken, I think I have seen your honor's worship before.

Rim. [*aside.*] The deuce! then he recollects me. [*To him.*] Possibly, Sir; every body knows the great poet Rimaldo.

John. 'Twas your great poetship I think, who once left a whole pack of cards with a lady I had the honor of serving, to distribute among her literary friends, in which you made a generous offer of your poetical services to the world.

Rim. [*aside.*] Oho, then I'm safe still. [*To him.*] Exactly so, Sir, I sell wit to those who have none.

Lu. And to judge by the little that remains on your hands, your merchandize must have had a very ready sale. But you must not expect the same good luck here, for my mistress has wit enough for herself and half a dozen others, as you may soon see, for here she comes. So your humble servant, I'm off.

John. So am I too.

Rim. Nay, pray stay and introduce me.

John. No, no, you introduced yourself readily enough to us, and you may introduce yourself to her also.

[*Exeunt John and Lucy.*

[Enter *Mrs. Harley and Mr. Francis. Rimaldo bows and scrapes for some time without their perceiving him.*]

Mrs. H. I have but one word more to say, Mr. Francis; unless you wish to share the fate of Mr. Clermont, and be entirely banished this house, you must renounce all pretensions to the hand of Emily. You may flatter yourself that you have sufficient ascendancy over my husband to prevent such a step being taken, but if I choose to exert my power, we shall soon see which of us has the most.

Mr. F. To the tone of menace you assume, Madam, I shall make no reply; and as to my pretensions to Miss Emily, it is not such a prohibition that would make me renounce them. From me, however, Sir James has nothing to fear as a rival. I found that my addresses were not agreeable to the object of them, and I relinquished them immediately, as every man of honor and sense would do. But in relinquishing them, I resolved that as a friend and relation, I would assume the office of my fair Cousin's protector, against any one, and every one, who would seek to force her inclinations.

[*Rimaldo still keeps bowing and scraping, endeavouring to attract the notice of Mrs. Harley and Mr. Francis.*]

Mrs. H. Force her inclinations indeed! [*She turns, and seeing Rimaldo.*] Oh, heavens! what horrible apparition do I behold!

Rim. No horrible apparition, fair lady, but——

Mrs. H. But what?—speak instantly.

Rim. But Rimaldo, the poet, whose name doubtless cannot be unknown to one so distinguished in the literary world as Mrs. Harley.

Mrs. H. I cannot say that I ever heard the name before, and should therefore much doubt—

Rim. Not of my poetical talents, I hope, Madam; but if you do, deign only to lay that fair hand for one short moment on the crown of my head, and your ladyship must be instantly convinced.

Mrs. H. Faugh! lay my hand on such a head indeed!

Rim. (*pulling a roll of papers out of his pocket.*) Then, Madam, here are other vouchers, poetical productions of every kind, from the humble distich to the lofty elegy; from the amorous madrigal to the soaring Epopœa: here are odes which would shame that of Dryden himself; sonnets, which even the muse of Petrarch might be proud to claim; with songs and stanzas to the rising and to the setting sun, and to all the phases of the moon.

Mr. F. Which you are going to publish by subscription, and wish to be honored with Mrs. Harley's name as a subscriber: such, I presume, is the object to which all this preamble leads.

Rim. (*aside*) Egad! a good idea. (*to them*) With all due submission, such was indeed my errand, and I

should be proud of the honor of your excellency's support also: by what name, title, and description, shall I have the pleasure of putting you down?

Mrs. H. I have no doubt that I should be charmed with your writings, Mr. Rimaldo, but at present I have not leisure to attend to them myself. If you will leave some specimens, Mr. Fabricio shall look them over and give me his opinion of them.

Rim. Oh, I know that he's an excellent judge: he has favored me himself with his name. I'm sure he'll recommend—

Mr. F. You are acquainted with Mr. Fabricio?

Rim. Most intimately: often do little jobs for him: wrote him an inscription in verse but the other day—never produced more beautiful lines since first I devoted myself to the muses.

> Sacred no longer to th' Aonian maids,
> Far other forms inhabit now these shades.

Mr. F. [*to Mrs. Harley*] Ha! surely that's the inscription, just placed over the door of your labyrinth, Madam.

Mrs. H. Indeed it appears to be the same.

Mr. F. And Mr. Fabricio pretended it to be his own composition.

Rim. 'Tisn't the first time that he has played the daw, and decked himself out in my plumes.

Mrs. H. Are you really the author of these lines?

Rim. Most certainly, Madam.

Mrs. H. Aha, Mr. Fabricio, you are then detected in a fib.

Rim. And not the first he has told in his life, I ca[n] assure you, Madam. Besides, lying is one of the least o[f] his peccadillos,— I could tell a story — but perhaps, Madam—for, in short, though a poet, we must not offend against chaste ears; but, believe me, he has not been a Jesuit for nothing.

Mr. F. [*aside*] This man seems to know him well; he may be of essential service to me.

Mrs. H. Well, Mr. Rimaldo, you may return to-morrow, and then we can talk further about your poems.

Rim. Most joyfully will I attend your ladyship, if happily I do not die upon the road to-day through inanition.

Mrs. H. If I could permit that, I should justly incur the severest displeasure of all votaries of the muses. [*she rings the bell.*]

Mr. F. I would fain know whether it be possible to find a poet who is not hungry.

Rim. The fire of genius devours us, and makes us in our turn devourers.

[Enter JOHN.]

Mrs. H. John, show this gentleman all possible attention.

Mr. F. Yes, all possible attention—do you hear, John? [*aside to John*] And contrive to detain him till I can speak with him in private.

John. [*aside to Mr. Francis.*] Which, I dare say, will be done without difficulty;—depend upon me, Sir. [*Exeunt Mrs. Harley and Mr. Francis.*] All possible attention—Yes, all possible attention. I wonder what the devil they can mean.

Rim. 'Tis an elevated way of speaking; but in plain terms it signifies, give him his belly-full of good victuals and drink.

John. Oho, now I understand perfectly. [*Exit.*

Rim. All possible attention—do you hear, Mr. John? Upon my word, this was a lucky inspiration of mine, to think of huddling on my own clothes again, and returning to make an acquaintance with the good citizen's kitchen.—But, mercy on me, now I recollect myself, I never thought of my friend John's letter to Mr. Warren, which I was to deliver at the Plough, and 'tis gone to little *brokee* over and above the hire of his coat and waistcoat: and no bad windfall for *bio* neither. As the bearer is to have a handsome reward, he'll have nothing better to do than to find out Mr. Warren, and deliver it; so it will get safe at last, though not with all the dispatch Mr. John seemed to wish it.

[Enter JOHN, *with bottles and glasses, &c.*]

John. Here's a cheering sight for a poet, isn't it, my good man of jingle?

Rim. Most cheering, I assure thee, Mr. John. Never, in the most ardent fit of poetic inspiration, did I experience such rapture at beholding the ranged verses take their stand upon the paper, as I now feel in beholding the bottles and glasses taking their stations on the table.

John. 'Tis because you already feel that there's more fire, more spirit, in one glass of wine, than in all the muses.

Rim. Insult and ridicule my verses as you please, Mr. John, but fill out a bumper. I can never be angry with any one who pays attention to my good friend here. *(patting his stomach.)* Sounds hollow, doesn't it, Mr. John—great need of attention—never less proud, Mr. John, than when I'm quite empty. You carry arms that disarm me.

John. (Uncorking a bottle, he fills a glass, and presents to Rimaldo.) See how the rogues sparkle and glitter.

Rim. They are weapons which often kill reason. *(drinks the wine.)*

John. So much the better: poets have thereby an enemy the less.

Rim. I dare say the wine is excellent, Mr. John, but I can never judge well by the first glass. *(John fills the glass again; he drinks.)* Indeed, it appears nectar itself—but I shall judge better by a third glass. *(John fills the glass, he drinks again.)* No, I am not mistaken; 'tis more inspiring than even the spring of Helicon.

John. Come then, Mr. Poet, since 'tis so inspiring, let's have some of your inspirations. Rhyme us now something pretty on the subject.

Rim. As to pretty, I can't say, but at least it shall come from the heart. Fill the glasses, if you please, once more: I am never fully inspired under four glasses.. *(he drinks again.)* Now to reflect a moment——humph—I have it. *(Sings)*

To exchange friendly healths the heart's always inclin'd—
Let's exchange them, kind Sir, then, with three hearty cheers;
As we drink, at each glass the wine better we find,
And the glass in proportion too little appears.

John. Ha, ha, ha! Not much amiss. Ah, Mr. Rimaldo, love and wine—nothing like them.

Rim. As to wine, I perfectly agree with you; but for love, I have entirely forsworn it: the blind god strewed my path of life with cypress and thorns, which jolly Bacchus has kindly changed into roses, while Apollo has inspired me to exalt the one and decry the other. Hear me, Mr. John, and profit by the moral. [*he sings.*]

Love's vot'ry once, I'm now his foe,
Now wine I seek, and shun the lass:
Love promis'd joy, he gave me woe.
Bliss unalloy'd lives in the glass.

Fill the glasses if you please, Mr. John, and repeat the same at the end of every verse; on no account omit this ceremony.

John. [*drawing another cork.*] 'Twere best then to uncork another bottle, we know not how many verses there may be.

Rim. [*singing again.*]

To brave love's darts, to brave his fire,
I among wisdom's maxims class;
But, as my highest joy, desire
Both day and night to ply the glass.

See from love's bow an arrow dart,
See heart-aches follow in a mass:
The cork see from the bottle part,
And pleasure flows into the glass.

John. Upon my word the song is excellent, and sung with taste. But, Mr. Poet, if I am not much mistaken, I have heard it before.

Rim. What, from Fabricio, I suppose—a rascal! and I dare say he claimed it for his own as well as the inscription.

John. You know Mr. Fabricio, then?

Rim. Know him! a scoundrel, that I do, and a little too much of him; an unprincipled *ne'er be good*, who not only claims my songs and verses as his own, but who cheated me this very morning out of a five-pound note that—

John. This very morning! what, I suppose you were the gentleman who sent for him to the Plough?

Rim. No, it was'nt I that sent for him, though I did indeed see him there. But how came you to know anything about his going to the Plough? I thought the whole matter had been a secret.

John. A secret indeed! as if any thing that passes in the house was a secret from we gentlemen of the lace! But come, for the history of the five-pound note.

Rim. Ah, Mr. John, there are secrets which must be secrets still, even from you gentlemen of the lace.

John. [*aside*] Oho, but they shan't be secrets long, though. The wine already begins to mount a little towards his upper regions; a few glasses more and he'll become more communicative. Mr. Francis wanted to sift him it should seem— I'll e'en sift too; the profit of any thing that's to be sifted out of him may as well be mine as Francis's. [*Rimaldo has all this time been eating and drinking very eagerly.*] You seem to find the beef good, Mr. Rimaldo.

Rim. Excellent indeed, and I think the song has given me an appetite.

John. And the beef I suppose will make you thirsty, so as we begin to see the bottom of these bottles, you'll perhaps have no objection, Mr. Poet, to exchange the empty for full ones.

Rim. None in the least, Mr. John: next to an empty purse and an empty stomach, I don't know any thing that I've less fancy for than an empty bottle.

[*Exit John with the empty bottles.*

A good hearty kind of fellow this Mr. John. He hinted that he was deep in the secrets of the family; perhaps he knows more concerning the letter I brought here. I'm not quite easy about that matter—I dare say there was some damned rascality in it—I'll first ply Mr. John well with his own good liquor, then he'll grow communicative, and I may have it all out.

[Re-enter JOHN.]

John. Mr. Poet, I've been thinking that we may as well adjourn to the butler's pantry, where we shall be in no danger of interruption. We shan't be quite so near the clouds where you poets usually roam, but we shall be nearer the cellar, which, in your present disposition, may perhaps please you altogether as well.

Rim. At all times, and under all circumstances, Mr. John, I prefer the cellar teeming with good wine, to the clouds impregnated only with miserable water, so I'll follow you with pleasure.

John. [*aside*] Now for the history of the five-pound note.

Rim. [*aside*] Now for the contents of the letter.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. EMILY's *Dressing-room.*

EMILY *sitting at a table, folding a letter.*

Em. 'Tis done; this is the last intercourse that ever shall take place between the traitor and his too easy dupe. I have bade him an eternal adieu; my heart is more tranquil; and if a momentary weakness should hereafter shake my resolution, in recalling to mind his perfidy, his deep hypocrisy, every sentiment but profound indignation will instantly be suppressed.

[Enter LUCY *hastily.*]

Lu. Madam, Madam, the farmer's little girl has just brought this letter: I refused to take it at first, and ordered her to carry it back, but she said she dared not, for Mr. Clermont was so sad and so melancholy, that she verily believed he would kill himself, if Miss Emily would not read the letter.

Em. Oh! hypocrite, hypocrite! but, Lucy, I think I will see what he says—We'll see how far he dares to carry his deep dissimulation. [*she reads.*]

"What can have retarded you so long, my dearest Emily? You flattered me with hopes that I should see you this evening, and I have great need of such consolation. The generous sentiments you profess for me, alone support me under the indignities I have received from Mr. and Mrs. Harley. If you cannot grant me a few moments' conversation, oh tell me at least what detains you: believe that my heart is wholly depressed with a sadness which your presence alone can dissipate, believe that one look from you can alone console your faithful and devoted

CLERMONT."

Lu. How dare the wretch suppose that he shall ever again see one, who has found him so false and perfidious?

Em. Yes, Lucy, I will see him, to his face will I reproach him with his falsehood, his treachery. I will bid him return and seek consolation in the bosom of his Mathilda; she can better dissipate the sadness to which his heart is a prey, than the too-credulous Emily.—Yes, from my own lips he shall know how much I despise, detest him.

[Enter Mr. FRANCIS.]

Mr. F. Still weeping, my lovely Emily—to see you thus afflicted wounds me most sensibly; Oh endeavour to

tranquillise your mind. [*Aside.*] I dare not yet tell her of the hopes I entertain, lest they should prove fallacious. [*To her*] If compelled by your sense of rectitude to renounce an union, in the thoughts of which you had placed your whole happiness, yet increase not your affliction by any fears of having another husband imposed upon you. Rely on me, I will be your protector in all cases, nor permit you to be oppressed, even by Mr. Harley himself.

Em. Oh generous, generous man!

[Enter Mr. HARLEY.]

Mr. H. In tears still, child? You may well weep for shame at the sentiments you have entertained for Mr. Clermont. But your fault shall be forgiven, if you will accept the husband I have promised Mrs. Harley to propose to you.

Em. Never, Sir. I know well who this husband is, and never will I give my hand to a man whom my heart despises. If you have failed in the resolution which as a man, and as a father, you should have opposed against the importunities of an imperious wife, of an over-bearing mother-in-law, I will at least never forget what I owe both to you and to myself, and here I solemnly declare that I never will be the wife of Sir James O'Ryan.

Mr. H. [*Aside.*] I can't say I am very sorry for that; but, to satisfy Mrs. Harley, I must say something more. [*To Emily.*] It seems then, Miss Emily, that you are determined not to accept a husband of my recommending. Remember, this is the second you have refused. But if you will be so perverse, and consult nothing but your own fancies, not a single sixpence of my fortune shall ever be your's. Of your mother's fortune, I well know you cannot be deprived.

Mr. F. And mine, which is ample, shall stand in the place of her father's.

Mr. H. How, cousin, dare you encourage the disobedience of a child?

Mr. F. No: but I would endeavour to make a relation, whom I esteem, feel the duty of a parent. I would take from Emily every inducement to be guilty of so much treachery, as to contract a marriage contrary to her inclinations.

Em. My generous friend! No, I will not contract a marriage contrary to my inclinations. [*She hesitates a moment.*] But a few hours are passed, Mr. Francis, since I refused you this hand. If still it be the object of your wishes, take it, it is your's. My esteem, my most profound esteem, was your's, even before I knew you personally; and if I do not love you with the same ardor that I have loved another, let a sweet, a tender friendship supply the place of love, and insure our mutual happiness.

Mr. H. If this be not mere perverseness, I don't know what is. When I wanted her to have him, she wou'dn't; and now that I want her to have another, she will have nobody else.

Mr. F. Be calm, my cousin, this is not the moment to discuss such a matter. [*To Emily.*] My charming friend, flattered beyond expression by so great a proof of your esteem, I must yet repeat the same thing to you, that we are all at present too much agitated to discuss an affair of such high importance with the calmness it requires. If, when we are more composed——

Mr. H. Mighty well, Sir, mighty well; but we shall see presently whether 'tis you or I that hate the disposal of Emily's hand. [*Aside.*] I think I've now done enough for Mrs. Harley; she may fight the rest of the battle herself. [*Exit.*

Mr. F. My generous Emily, far be it from me to take advantage of a sentiment, which I fear has its origin only in a too recent disappointment. If some time hence, when cool reflection may be your's, these sentiments should still be the cherished inmates of your bosom, we will talk farther on the subject.

Em. Oh! I am sure they cannot be changed.

Mr. F. Wait only till to-morrow. A night's rest will compose your spirits. Would that I could now remain with you. I dare flatter myself that I might have power to tranquillise you farther; but business of importance calls me elsewhere. Farewell, my lovely girl, and consider always how much less poignant are the feelings of the injured than of the injurer. [*Exit.*

Em. Why have I been so long blind to this man's merits? Yes, Lucy, nothing now can alienate me from him. He who acts so generously as a friend, never can be

other than a tender and indulgent husband; and if I cannot love a second time to the excess I once have loved, I will endeavour to render my friendship so like a stronger passion, that it may be mistaken for that passion itself.

Lu. You are in the right, Madam, you cannot fail of being happy with Mr. Francis; he will soon make you forget Mr. Clermont.

Em. Yes, 'tis resolved. I hasten for the last time to see the traitor, to upbraid him with my wrongs, and bid him farewell for ever. Then, from that moment, shall my heart be wholly resigned to its new attachment.

[*Exit with Lucy.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. MR. HARLEY'S *house is seen at a distance in the back ground. Before the house is a lawn and shrubbery, which is terminated by an iron pallisade about half way up the stage, in which is a gate. On the left hand, towards the front of the stage, appears Farmer Thompson's house in the side scene. On the right hand is a field gate, close by which passes the high road to London. Several trees are scattered about The night is just closed in.*

CLERMONT *comes out from the farm-house.*

Cler. She comes not! Can she have forgotten her promise. Oh, no! I know her heart—know that she cannot designedly have failed me. She is, perhaps, so strictly watched, that to escape has been impossible. What can be done? The night already is closed in, and I must return to town—return without the sweet consolation of one last adieu. But hark, some one approaches. (*He goes towards the iron gate. Mr. Francis comes down the lawn, advances to the iron gate, and opens it.*) Ah, no! it is no female form, no female footstep. I had best not be seen. [*He conceals himself behind a tree.*]

Mr. F. [*Looking about.*] I understand my wanderer to be at the farm. My heart flutters at the thoughts of this interview. If he be indeed the man I seek, and still be culpable!—But hark——

[*At this moment Warren appears at the gate, which opens on the road, and speaks as he comes up to it.*]

War. Come on, Roberts. Charge the postilions not to quit the horses, and to keep the chaise-door open.

Mr. F. What can this mean? I may as well conceal myself, and observe. [*He goes behind a tree.*]

Cler. [*Peeping from his concealment.*] Great heaven! Surely 'tis Warren's voice? What new villainy can he be meditating? [*He retires again.*]

[*Warren and Roberts come forward through the gate.*]

Rob. I have brought your pistols.

Mr. F. [*Peeping from the tree.*] They seem robbers.

War. [*Taking the pistols.*] It was well by way of precaution, though I do not suppose we shall have occasion for them. Emily will not make much resistance.

Cler. (*Peeping from the tree.*) Emily!

Mr. F. (*Peeping from the tree.*) Emily!

War. Come on, all is safe. (*He and Roberts go towards the iron gate.*) Aha, she has left the gate open to save time. These stars are somewhat too bright—a good black cloud would have kept our secret better.

Rob. And have been more favourable to Emily's timidity.

War. She comes not—yet the hour is past.

Rob. By five minutes at least—Oh! the impatience of love.

War. Rather the alarms of fear—think it is question of a fine woman and a large fortune.

Rob. You should have put the fortune first, for I believe you think more of that than of the woman. And for what part of the continent are you bound?

War. For Hamburgh. 'Tis thither that I have transported the treasures which my industry has placed out of the reach of Mrs. Harley's extravagance, and I waited but for this last, this greatest of all my treasures, to follow them.

Rob. You won't even leave Mr. Harley his daughter to console him in his bankruptcy.

Mr. F. (*Peeping from the tree.*) His bankruptcy!

Cler. (*Peeping from the tree.*) The rascals!

War. I cannot see, without the profoundest admiration, how tranquilly the old gentleman dreams on, with his foot

on the very brink of a tremendous precipice. He deserves it all, however, for suffering himself to be so duped by a vain and silly wife, herself the dupe of two of the vilest cheats in all London. But hark! I hear light footsteps on the turf. She comes! she comes!

EMILY *comes down the lawn, leaning upon* LUCY. *They both pass through the iron gate.*

Em. I tremble, I scarcely dare advance.

Lu. Courage, Madam, 'tis but a few steps now.

War. Oh, transport! 'tis she!

Cler. (*Peeping from the tree,*) Great Heaven! 'tis she!

Mr. F. (*Peeping from the tree.*) Oh, woman! 'tis she!

Em. I know not how I have found resolution to take this step.

Lu. I think I hear some one. Perhaps 'tis he.

War. Yes, yes, you have nothing to fear, my lovely girl, 'tis he.

Lu. (*Terrified.*) Heavens! 'tis the voice of Warren.

Em. (*Starting.*) Sure 'tis the voice of Warren.

War. Yes, 'tis indeed the voice of Warren—the transported, the enamoured Warren.

Em. What do you want, Sir? What brings you here at this late hour, in this suspicious manner?

War. There is no occasion to dissemble, my love. True, I am not alone, as you perhaps expected; but this is only a friend, who will assist us in our flight.

Em. How, Sir, whence this audacity?

Lu. (*Whispering Warren.*) You have made a vile blunder here: haste and begone, or dread the consequence.

War. Begone!—What! in the very moment of my happiness! Shake off this timidity, my dearest girl; 'tis amiable, I must confess; yet believe me, we have nothing to fear.

Em. Indeed, I think I have every thing to fear. Help! help!

(*Clermont and Mr. Francis rush out from their concealment. Clermont endeavours to seize Warren by the arm, crying—*"STOP, TRAITOR!" *Warren takes a pistol from his belt, and aims at Clermont, who contrives to turn aside his arm, so that the pistol misses him. Mr. Francis endeavours to seize on Roberts, who escapes by the gate on the road. The Farmer and his Servants*

come out from the farm, with lights, carrying pitch-forks, pokers, tongs, &c. &c.

Em. Ah, Clermont! Clermont! (*She faints into Lucy's arms.*)

Lu. Be comforted, Madam, pray be comforted; Mr. Clermont is not killed, and Mr. Francis is here.

Mr. F. My sweet Emily!

Cler. (*To Warren, who struggles to escape from him.*) No, traitor, hope not to escape me.

(*Mr. Harley and Sir James come out from the house hastily, followed by John and other servants with lights.*)

Mr. H. What the devil is all this to do about? Robbers, I suppose. Robbers of a singular kind, however—faces all pretty well known at my house. May I ask the meaning of all this? Mr. Warren is in custody, while Mr. Clermont has taken upon himself the office of constable. I hope my worthy partner was not attempting to rob my worthy clerk of his worthy mistress.

Mr. F. No, Sir, Mr. Warren aimed at a much higher prize. But Emily revives. How is it, my sweet cousin?

Em. Where is he? is he hurt? is he killed? Oh, answer me, tell me, is he safe?

Mr. F. He is, my dearest Emily. Pray compose yourself.

Cler. (*To the Farmer.*) Mr. Thompson, will you and your servants be so good as to look to this man, and take care that he does not escape. (*The Farmer and his Servants surround Warren.*)

Em. Oh, speak! is he yet alive? is he not killed?

Cler. (*Going up to her.*) No, dearest Emily, I escaped most happily; but had I been wounded ever so severely, the kind, the tender interest you show for my safety had been my instant cure.

Em. Oh! why do I show this interest? cruel, cruel Clermont.

Mr. H. Whew! this is going pretty far, I think, in the face of so many people.

Mrs. Harley and Fabricio come down the lawn.

Mrs. H. What am I to think of all this? Half the neighbourhood seems assembled here; and there are

pistols fired, and screams of murder, and I know not what besides. May one approach with safety? Nobody speak? Mr. Harley, may I ask for an explanation?

Mr. H. You may ask if you please, but I believe 'tis what none of us can give. There are robbers in the case, that seems clear; but whether they came to carry off my gold, or my daughter, does not appear equally certain.

Mrs. H. Only let Mr. Fabricio feel their heads, and he'll tell you directly.

Mr. F. I suspect, Madam, that the matter may be easily explained, without taxing Mr. Fabricio's scientific skill.

Mrs. H. Then, Sir, as you seem in the secret, I suppose we may apply to you for an explanation.

Mr. F. You will perhaps be surprised to hear, as the beginning of it, that I could not feel entirely satisfied of Mr. Clermont's guilt, notwithstanding the evidence appeared so strong against him; and, in any case, I thought it highly unjust to condemn him without hearing what could be said in his defence.

Mrs. H. Indeed, Mr. Francis, I begin to think he's some spurious progeny of your own, you interest yourself so prodigiously about him.

Sir J. Right, Madam, I dont see what else could bewitch him so.

Mr. F. Are you, Sir, so extremely bewitched by *your* spurious progeny?—But, waving this question, let me say that, impressed with such ideas, and hearing that Mr. Clermont was at the farm, I was hastening thither to learn from his own lips what he had to offer in his justification. I suspect that a motive not very dissimilar had attracted another of the company to this spot. Am I wrong, my lovely Emily?

Em. Not wholly right, indeed; and yet, I must confess, not far distant from the truth.

Mr. F. I happened to precede my fair cousin, and arrived here almost at the same moment with Mr. Warren, just in time to learn from a conversation, which I overheard between him and his companion, who has unfortunately escaped, that, after having in quality of the associate of Mr. Harley, been guilty of embezzling money for his own private purposes, so that the partnership was brought

to the verge of a bankruptcy, he was now come with the design of carrying off Miss Emily.

Mr. H. A bankruptcy!—the rascal!

Mrs. H. Oh mercy!—then I suppose my cabinet of craniology must be sold.

Cler. (*Coming forward.*) It was my earnest desire, Sir, to have imparted to you this morning some discoveries I had made, which led me to suspect Mr. Warren of the most profligate mal-practices; but the hasty manner in which I was discarded from your house rendered this impossible.

Mr. H. See what comes of being ruled by one's wife; for it was to oblige her that I refused to see you.

Mrs. H. Nay, Mr. Harley, remember the hundred pounds.

Mr. F. (*Who had now, for the first time looked attentively at Clermont.*) No, I am not mistaken in my suspicions—it is—it must be he! Charles Watson!

Cler. (*Starting.*) Good heavens! who pronounces that name?

Mr. F. Do you not recollect me, Mr. Watson?

Cler. Your pardon, Sir, I have a confused idea; but my astonishment was so great at being addressed by a name to which my ears have long been unaccustomed, that, at first, I scarcely knew whether the sound were real or imaginary.

Mr. F. You do not, however, disown the name. Will you permit me a few words in private; but few will be requisite to give you full conviction that here is no illusion.

(*He and Clermont walk aside.*)

Mrs. H. What's in the wind now—more matter for craniological experiments as it should seem.

Mr. H. And now, Mr. Warren, will you be so good as to explain what could put so extravagant an idea into your head, as that of running away with Miss Emily.

War. The ardent attachment, Sir, which, under her own hand, she has so often expressed for me; and her silent assent to my taking the present step.

Em. What do you mean, Mr. Warren?—I authorise this step! I receive your addresses, and pay them with assurances of attachment.

War. I presume, Madam, though by an affected inno-

cence you would excuse yourself to Mr. Harley, that you will scarcely carry dissimulation so far as to disown these letters, this picture. (*He takes from his pocket a parcel of letters and Emily's picture.*)

Em. I am all astonishment!—How came this picture into your hands?

Lu. (*Aside to John.*) What's to be done? all will be blown—we had better be off. (*She attempts to slide away, Warren perceives her.*)

War. Stop that woman, I entreat—I demand it in justice. (*Two of the farmer's servants stop Lucy.*) You then deny, Madam—

Mr. H. Permit me, Sir, to look at the letters. (*He takes the letters and picture from Warren. Clermont and Mr. Francis rejoin the company.*) It is, indeed, Emily's picture. What am I to think of this, child?—Can you deny having encouraged Mr. Warren?

Cler. Oh heavens! is it possible?

Mr. F. I cannot understand all this.

Mrs. H. I am not now surprised at the confidence with which Mr. Warren but this morning demanded Miss Emily in marriage.

Sir J. Who could have suspected Miss Emily of encouraging Mr. Warren, when she saw me almost every day.

Mr. H. What, Emily, not a word of answer; quite dumb-founded?

Em. Almost, indeed, Sir. I scarcely know whether I am in my senses or not. As to these letters, I can solemnly affirm, that, till this moment, I never saw them. With regard to the picture I must refer you to Lucy for an explanation. I confided it to her some hours ago, to be remitted, not to Mr. Warren, but to another person, who—Oh heavens! must I say it? who, I fear, merited it as little. Lucy, tell us how this picture came into the hands of Mr. Warren.

Lu. I—I—I—had the misfortune, Madam—I had the misfortune—

War. No misfortune—you gave it voluntarily and unsolicited into my hands, with an assurance that it was sent me by your mistress.

Mr. H. (*Still examining the letters.*) I dont know how

it is, but the more I look at these letters, the less they appear to me Emily's hand-writing.

Em. Can it be? yes, I fear I discover a detestable plot. Give me leave, Sir, to look at the letters. (*She takes the letters from Mr. Harley.*) Yes, 'tis even so, this is Lucy's hand writing.

War. Lucy's! impossible!

Sir J. Lucy's! incredible!

Mr. H. Lucy's! abominable!

Mrs. H. Lucy's! incomprehensible!

War. But Lucy cannot write: so she has often told me.

Em. Has she so? I am sorry to hear it.

War. Sorry! You mean to say that I have been her dupe.

Em. Speak, Lucy, answer: how is this?

Lu. Indeed, Madam, I cannot deny it. John, however, will explain all better than I can.

John. Yes, I will explain, and perhaps explain more than some persons may wish. (*To Emily.*) But I must begin, Madam, by humbly imploring your pardon.

Mr. H. Begin, if you please, by telling your story, and then ask pardon.

John. In brief, Sir, it is this: Mr. Warren was desperately in love with Miss Emily; and said he should certainly die if she would not favor his addresses. Miss Emily refused having any thing to say to him; so Lucy and I, Sir, I and Lucy, Sir, we, we received the letters, we, I say, Lucy and I, Sir, we——

Mr. F. Kept the letters, and answered them in Miss Emily's name.

John. Indeed 'tis true—we were so wicked.

War. Execrable villains.

John. (*to Warren.*) You have, however, no reason to complain of us: you would have deceived others, and we deceived you, you are but paid in your own coin. (*To the Company.*) With Miss Emily the case is far different —we have acted infamously towards her, seduced by the gold which Mr. Warren pillaged from our master.—Down then, on our knees, Lucy, to solicit her pardon. (*They kneel on each side of Emily.*)

Em. Rise both; as to pardon, ask your own consciences whether you deserve it.

Mr. F. Behold one mystery explained; let me proceed to the developement of another, which I will begin by presenting to the company—(*he takes Clermont by the hand.*) Mr. Watson, the only son of an intimate friend of mine, Sir William Watson, a wealthy Baronet in India.

Em. (*aside*) Oh heavens!

Mr. H. Are you mad, cousin?

Mrs. H. Do you think, Mr. Fabricio, that can be the cranium of a Baronet's son?

Mr. F. You will recollect, my good cousin, that when I went to India, I was recommended to the notice of Sir William Watson, who had been long established at Madras. A short time before my arrival, Sir William had married a second wife, young, beautiful, and haughty. Her imperious and capricious temper soon occasioned a quarrel between Sir William and his son, which ended in the young man's being unjustly banished the house by his father and turned friendless, and almost pennyless into the wide world. [*Mr. Harley sighs.*] You sigh, Cousin.

Mr. H. 'Tis that—'tis that—'twas pity Sir William—but go on, Cousin.

Mrs. H. I understand and can despise your insinuations, Mr. Harley; but say, did I ever make a quarrel between you and your daughter?

Mr. H. Go on, Cousin, go on; your story interests me.

Mr. F. Young Watson departed for England, recommended by Mr. Everard of Madras to his brother in London. I soon after went up the country and returning to Madras in my way to England, found Lady Watson on her death-bed, when seized with remorse for her past misconduct, she conjured her husband to seek out and be reconciled to his son. My friend charged me to search for the young man in England, while he endeavoured to procure intelligence of him in India. In these researches I have been secretly employed ever since my arrival, but, till this happy moment, without effect; I can now only regret that numerous accidents have prevented my meeting sooner with my young friend, tho' I have been six weeks in England, and most of the time under Mr. Harley's roof.

Mr. H. Aha! I understand then why you were so inquisitive about Mr. Clermont this morning—you began to suspect—

Mr. F. Even so. And now, this matter explained, Mr. Watson, with your permission, will proceed to the disclosure of what he knows respecting Mr. Warren's malversations.

War. It is needless, Sir; I acknowledge my guilt, and confess that I am justly punished in having been made so egregious a dupe by those two impostors.

[*Pointing to John and Lucy.*

Mr. H. I shan't, however, be satisfied with that punishment. [*To the Farmer.*] Thompson, will you be so good as to secure your prisoners for the night; to-morrow you shall be released from the charge. [*The farmer and his servants lead Warren into the farm-house.*] And now suppose we all return to the house.

Mrs. H. Whither, if I might be permitted to advise, Mr. Warren should be brought also. I have several skulls of Cheats and Robbers in my Cabinet, and by comparing them with his, we might be enabled to determine the extent of his guilt.

Mr. F. And as you seem also to wish, Madam, that Mr. Watson's head should undergo a craniological examination, you will probably ask him to be of our party.

Em. Hold, Sir, whatever may be that Gentleman's rank, you, who are not ignorant of his conduct, can scarcely think of his being received into our society. Let him go and impart his good fortune to his beloved Mathilda, nor hope longer to impose on the too-credulous Emily.

Cler. What do I hear?—can that be the voice of Emily—am I awake, or do I dream?

Mrs. H. Yes, go, Sir—anecdotes of the female pedant with the empty skull will have additional zest from the mouth of a Baronet's son.

Mr. H. And so will the lamentations of the poor henpecked husband.

Cler. What can this mean? Mr. Francis, may I apply to you—

Sir J. [*Aside to Fabricio.*] I can't conceive, Fab. why thou hast remained silent all this time, nor attempted to display thy genius by some master-stroke. Now

they've all begun to badger him, 'tis the very time for you to thrust in your oar.

Fab. [*Aside to Sir James.*] I am afraid 'tis over with us—however, let's have one push. [*To them.*] Mr. Clermont, or Mr. Watson, I should think, can have nothing more entertaining or interesting to relate than his own adventures, if we may judge from the interest they have excited here, and from the implicit credit they have obtained.

Mrs. H. The hint is well thrown in, Mr. Fabricio. We have readily believed his story, tho' we have nothing to authenticate it but the assertions of Mr. Francis and himself.

Fab. And tho' I have no doubt that Mr. Francis is sincere, and really believes whatever Mr. Clermont may have related to him, yet one does sometimes see the best of men so shamefully imposed upon by the worst——

Cler. The truth of my story does not rest upon my own assertions alone; search the will of the deceased Everard, you will find me described as Charles Watson, Son of Sir William Watson, of Madras, calling himself by the name of Clermont.

Mr. H. Indeed! I never knew this before.

Cler. By my request, Sir, it was never mentioned.—As to the rest, some strange misapprehension seems to prevail here with respect to a lady of the name of Mathilda. One of that name I certainly do know, for I had the happiness of saving her aged father from a prison, and herself from ruin. There are persons present to whom this story is well known; to others it will not be difficult to produce proofs of its truth.

John. Which proofs I beg permission instantly to lay before them. [*Exit.*

Fab. [*aside to Sir James.*] What can he mean? cursed fortune, why would you make us speak?

Sir J. [*aside to Fabricio.*] Never be daunted, man, at 'em again.

Enter JOHN, with RIMALDO, *somewhat elevated.*

Fab. [*aside to Sir James.*] Great heaven, Rimaldo! then we are indeed undone.

Sir J. [*aside to Fabricio.*] For this time, Fab. I do think, thy genius has played thee a slippery trick.

John. Mr. Rimaldo, behold the two gentlemen I mentioned.

Rim. I know 'em well, and know 'em for a couple of as arrant *ne'er-be-goods* as ever cheated a poor poet out of his fair earnings.

Sir J. Scoundrel, do you pretend to talk thus of a person of my rank?

Rim. A fig for your rank.

Fab. [*aside to Rimaldo.*] Be silent, and you shall be well rewarded.

Rim. Well rewarded! Sir James has nothing but what he gets at play or by cajoling Madame Harley; Fabricio has nothing to live on but his wits, and they've failed him at present; Mr. Francis is rich, Miss Emily is rich, Mr. Clermont is son to a great Baronet: Rimaldo, thou hast a better chance of reward for speaking than for being silent; speak then.

Mr. F. Admirably reasoned, my honest friend, let us then hear all the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Rim. Honest friend! I beg, Sir, you will be pleased to observe that I am Rimaldo, the poet, and no *honest friend* For the rest, *in vino veritas*, as we poets say, *ergo* I am at this moment incapable of lying. Thus it is then. Ladies and Gentlemen, we all know that the Muses and the lady Fortune are personages of very different tastes, and that the favorites of the former are seldom much countenanced by the latter.

Mr. F. And so you being a favorite of the Muses, were somewhat flouted by Fortune.

Rim. Exactly so, Sir. Now this being known to the great Fabricio, Rimaldo, said he in an unlucky moment, when nature was abhorring a void in my poor stomach; Rimaldo, said he, wilt thou gain money;—My probity hesitated; yes, muttered my stomach in a deep and hollow tone, yes, sighed my purse equally empty, behold two votes against one, most votes you know always carry the day; what then could poor probity do but sneak away in silence.

Mr. F. Oh the case is perfectly clear, and so the great Fabricio——

Rim. Seeing my answer impressed in my hollow eyes,

in my long lanthern jaws; quit, says he, the mantle of Apollo, assume the livery, and bear this letter to the country house of Mr. Harley; arrive there exactly at five o'clock, and appearing as if you supposed me to be the person, to whom the letter is addressed, say you were charged by your mistress to deliver it into no hands but mine, then retire in haste, and instantly quit not only the house but the place.

Mr. F. The latter part of which instructions, it should seem, you did not observe very rigidly.

Rim. There came such a fine odor from the kitchen, that I did not know how to leave Clapham without becoming better acquainted with it. Quitting therefore my livery, and resuming my own natural form, I hastened to re-appear upon these boards, where thanks to the liberality of the fair owner, I have been very hospitably entertained.

Mr. F. And was Sir James O'Ryan privy to this plot?

Rim. Most certainly. Fabricio favored him with the office of paymaster. Sir James was not very willing to accept it, but he at length produced two five pound notes intended as a sop to my poor probity; only one however reached me; the other by some unlucky chance rested in the coat sleeve of the great Fabricio.

Sir J. Why, Fab. this piece of history is intirely new to me. Faith, your incensed son of Phœbus is telling the *whole* truth.

Fab. He's an infamous liar. Ladies and gentlemen—

Rim. Liar, yourself if you please, sublime genius; remember the inscription which you claimed as your writing. I hav'n't yet, however, told *all* the truth. Ladies and Gentlemen, the hundred pounds which Mr. Clermont is accused of having squandered away upon a worthless mistress, were employed to save from arrest a worthy, but indigent old gentleman, whom the great Fabricio would have thrown into prison, that a beautiful daughter of sixteen might become more easily his prey.

Fab. Infamous liar, again I say, have you no fear?

Rim. Have you no fear of the old gentleman tweaking you by the nose, when you call me so?

Mrs. H. Pray, Sir, how came you so well acquainted with this story?

Rim. I was employed, to my shame, I must confess it, by Mr. Fabricio, as his agent with the damsel, and was myself a witness to the noble manner in which Mr. Clermont rescued the unhappy father from the hands of the bailiffs, even at the moment when they were dragging him away.

Sir J. Truly, Fab. thy usual prudence and precaution abandoned thee when thou wert tempted to exercise thy legerdemain tricks towards this irascible son of Phœbus. Poets never pardon plagiarisms, you know. Ha! ha! ha!

Mr. H. Upon my word, Sir James, I do not see any thing in this affair to excite laughter, but a great deal to call forth blushes.

Mrs. H. Indeed it is a most odious affair, and I shall recommend that Mr. Fabricio's skull may be submitted to a craniological examination, as well as Mr. Warren's.

Em. Ah, Mr. Clermont, how cruelly have I been deceived.—Sir James, one who pretends to be a man of honor should blush—

Sir J. At what, Madam? I aspired to the happiness of possessing your hand, and found Mr. Clermont an obstacle to my wishes. In love, as in war, stratagem is fair; if that which I have employed to displace a dangerous rival may be liable to exception, look in your mirror, you will there find at once the cause and the excuse of my offence.

Cler. I was then on the point of losing my adorable Emily by a base treason.—Sir James, I have already told you that I detest treachery, and know how to punish the traitor.

Sir J. You take a mere joke, Sir, in a style extremely tragic. But if you really wish to turn the Comedy into a Tragedy, as my union with Miss Emily does not seem very near, I am ready to run you through the body whenever you please to call upon me.

John. [*To Mr. Harley.*] The postilions, Sir, who brought down Mr. Warren, are very clamorous to know what is become of him, and insist upon being paid and

discharged, if they are not to be employed on the service for which they were hired.

Mr. H. I have nothing to do with them, so they may go about their business, and get their money as they can, for they won't see Mr. Warren to-night.

Sir J. Hold a moment, Mr. John. As it should seem that my company may now be dispensed with at the Harleian villa, I may as well take the opportunity. [*To Mrs. Harley.*] My fair cousin, we part friends; on the great Fabricio let the weight of your anger descend, he has firm nerves and can bear it all. Miss Emily, believe me I resign with reluctance the hand, to obtain which my ingenious friend's talents have been so deeply taxed. Mr. Harley, I am your most obedient. As for you, Mr. Rimaldo—but no, you are beneath my anger. [*Exit.*

Fab. I should be sorry to see my friend go alone, lest seized by the way with a fit of despondency, fatal consequences should ensue—therefore, with the permission of this good company, I will take the second place in the carriage. As for you, Mr. Rimaldo, you may depend on hearing farther from me. For the present, adieu, famished rhymester.

Rim. Adieu.

Fab. Adieu, stroller! [*Exit.*

Em. How cruelly have I been deceived.

Mr. H. How infamously have I been defrauded.

Mrs. H. How indecently have I been sported with.

Rim. That you have indeed, Madam, and you don't yet know all. The sculls Mr. Fabricio sold to you at a high price, pretending that they came from foreign countries, he used to get for a shilling a-piece of the sextons round London.

Mrs. H. Ah! horror, horror.

Cler. Say now, my Emily, have I acted unworthily towards you?—shall I not be pardoned?—Oh, speak, tell me what I have yet to hope or fear. How am I to interpret this silence?

Mr. F. That she has promised her hand to me, therefore 'tis no longer hers to give. But take it, my worthy young friend, to you I resign it—I would not for worlds that it should be separated from her heart. [*He joins their hands.*]

Cler. Generous man! [*To Mr. Harley.*] It remains, Sir, for you to ratify this gift. As an humble clerk, I was cautious of acknowledging the sentiments I entertained for your lovely daughter; as the acknowledged son and heir of Sir William Watson, I dare hope that I shall not be thought unworthy of her hand.

Mr. H. Ah, well, I must say you've always been a good young man, so take the girl, and believe me I shall be proud of such a son-in-law.

THE END.

Remarks

ON

THE INTRIGUES OF A DAY.

It is the characteristic of the German drama to represent vice as the offspring of the head. This great theoretical error may be traced to the metaphysical notions of the literary students in that country; it is, indeed, the philosophical error of all men, who indulge themselves in contemplative retirement rather than take an active part and interest in the proceedings of the world. The modern French have practically adopted a different theory: they seem to regard the distinction between vice and virtue as consisting in the feelings, which the appearance of actions excites in the mind of the disinterested spectator: they imagine, that whatever is grand, must therefore be morally good, and whatever is mean, must in like manner be morally bad. The consequence of this is, that many of those things, which are of the highest importance to society, have lost their value with them, and many actions of the most mischievous tendency, by seeming to be ridiculous, are considered only as venial. But the source of vice is in the heart, the desires of which instigate the volition of the head, and the bad often do ill before they are aware of the character of their actions. Nor does the distinction between vice and virtue consist in sympathy or antipathy, but in something totally independent, not only of the sentiment of the witnesses, but of the commonalty of mankind. Vice is too dangerous ever to be ridiculous, and the actions of vicious men can never be fit subjects for comic representation. However much the human heart may in itself be prone to evil, the judgment partakes of the superior nature of the soul, and is always disgusted with the acts of vice in others.

We have been led to make these general observations by the perusal of this Comedy, which we are informed was

originally written in French, and translated under the superintendance of the author, in order to be represented on the English stage. As a translation, it has much of the freedom and cheerful expression of an original work, but the habits of thinking, given to the characters, are decidedly foreign, and had we not been told that it was actually the production of a foreigner, we should have thought that it must have proceeded from a mind very singularly constituted. Tragedy, which is chiefly founded on the effects of the passions, may admit of actions, incidents, and reflections, common to mankind; but Comedy, which, as in the present case, is founded on peculiarities of manner, does not always admit of the same universality. "THE INTRIGUES OF A DAY" is professedly an exhibition of English manners, and yet throughout the whole piece, no one appears to have that constant remembrance of the law, which is the great national peculiarity of mind in the English. The play opens with two persons in the act of committing what every Englishman, who reads the newspapers, 'knows to be a capital offence,' and although swindling and imposture in a variety of forms appear in the piece, not one of the delinquents seems to dread any legal consequence by discovery, and yet they are all represented as very clever and knowing persons. We are aware that similar incongruities have become very common on the stage, but we believe they are always thought objectionable, except in Farce, and even then they require to be very adroitly managed, and to have more the appearance of tricks than offences.

But with this fundamental objection to the alleged nationality of the characters, this Comedy is, in our opinion, a respectable composition, and those who may object to the theoretical error of the author, in representing public crimes as only ridiculous, should remember that "THE STRANGER," which absolutely insulted the common feelings of every well-regulated mind, was brought out with all advantages that could recommend it to popularity. Had the scene of "THE INTRIGUES OF A DAY" been laid in any other country than England, we should not have hesitated to class it with the best of the new comedies, which of late years have been performed in either of the London theatres. The arrangement is in-

genious, and many of the incidents are calculated to produce a true comic effect. Some of the characters may be a little too highly caricatured, but we think the public will not hesitate to allow, that they are less extravagant, and more natural, than many that are exhibited with success, and seen with good humor.

END OF NO. I.

THE PROPHETESS;

A Tragedy,

IN THREE ACTS.

CHARACTERS

TROJANS.

PRIAM.
DEIPHOBUS.
ÆNEAS.
ACHATES.
High-priest.
1st Citizen.
2d Citizen.

HECUBA.
CASSANDRA.
Priests, Soldiers, Citizens, &c. &c.

GREEKS.

AGAMEMNON.
ULYSSES.
MENELAUS.
Soldiers, &c. &c.

THE PROPHETESS,

A Tragedy.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Agamemnon's Tent. Beyond the opening a view of the Grecian Camp should be disclosed. the Horse should be seen in perspective. The Grecian Kings, &c. assembled.

AGAMEMNON, MENELAUS, and ULYSSES.

AGA. Ten years are past since to these shores we came
By Justice arm'd, and with the noblest bands
That ever gloried in a warrior's sight,
And still the Gods defer the fall of Troy.
Whether high Heaven has will'd that other hands
Shall reap the harvest, or, relenting, grants
Respite and pardon to the race of Priam,
We unprofanely may not dare to scan ;
But toil and battle, wounds and dire disease

Have now so thinn'd our gallant ranks, that all
Dejected droop, and murm'ring sigh for home.
O must ten years of valour and renown
Be summ'd and finish'd with a base retreat!
Must we, who have such dreadful days surviv'd,
Leave unfulfill'd the vengeance that we vow'd,
And quit this shore, so hallow'd with the tread
Of mighty warriors, and the dust of kings?—
Methinks I see them, (showing all their scars,
And sternly pointing to the towers of Troy),
Claim the great sacrifice to sooth their shades.

Men. When I survey our few remaining tents,
And the embrown'd gaunt soldiers, as they tend
Their wounded fellows, while at close of day
They pensive sit among yon sacred mounds
Where silent rest the valiant and the great;
Deeply I then that destiny deplore,
Which still entails, from my domestic wrongs,
In ev'ry change a heavier woe on Greece.
Low lie her brave and now her fame must fall.

Ulys. It falls when we lose hope. What! while the foes
Shrink and enshell themselves within their town,
Shall the magnanimous and choice of Greece,
Thus basely here conspire their own disgrace?
Let us forego the work of open war,
And try awhile the chance of stratagem.—
As I one ev'ning in my tent alone,
Musing of battles and companions slain,
Sat rapt in fancy, and with soften'd heart
Unconscious ponder'd o'er the lapse of life,
My youth for ever gone—I call'd to mind
An ancient metre which my muse rehears'd,
How Troy unconquer'd still should proudly stand,
Till pregnant Ida had a steed produced,
Whose midnight stall should be King Priam's tomb:

Which mystic riddle, as the ditty went,
Was deem'd a promise that, while Nature held
Her wonted course, the town should never fall.
The Gods, who prompt the purposes of men,
Did then inspire me with a scheme to work
The strange fulfilment of this prophecy.

Aga. O wisest Prince! and yon stupendous horse,
So long but deem'd a labor politic,
To keep your men from murmurers apart,
Was that divine suggestion?

Ulys. Even so.
Now let the army be embark'd, and sail
To where the western capes of Tenedos
Conceal the setting sun from Ilion's sight.
A hundred men, devoted, chosen vet'rans,
With Pyrrhus, placed within the hollow horse,
Shall here remain.

Aga. And what may then succeed?

Ulys. The Gods must choose. The task be ours to [watch
The births of fate. Devoted Troy, that oft
Has built her hopes upon our discontents,
Will doubtless pour her liberated throngs,
Who, for a trophy of this fatal war,
May draw, deceiv'd, the horse into the town.

Aga. Minerva wills it, and we should obey.

Exeunt.

SCENE II. *A Portico, affording a view of the interior of Troy.*

CASSANDRA, HECUBA, and PRIAM.

Cass. ' Omens and prodigies frown from the skies,

The winds bode in their whispers, and the earth
Groans heavily beneath the coming fate.

Hec. What moves thee, child, to this tremendous mood?

Cass. The Gods, the Gods of Troy.

Hec. Thou hast been ever
Wildly sublime: in all thy scope of thought
Prone to mysterious and prophetic boding.—
How many children blest my happy breast,
Sweet buds of beauty, that all blossom'd fair,
Till stormy war,—a wasteful winter! came,
And blasted and destroy'd. Patient, ye Gods!
To each succeeding woe I still have bow'd,
And thought humility might fate appease;
But now, ye on this solitary flower,
Ye bid your still unsparing wrath descend,
More deadly than the rude plucking war,
I feel my sore maternal heart repine.

Cass. O my dear mother, what a hideous scroll
The hand of Death displays in yonder sky!
Read, Priam, father, all ye Trojans, read,
It is the warrant of your dismal doom.

Hec. Where, where, Cassandra, where?

Pri. Out, out on this.

Hec. Whither so fast?

Cuss. To mourn, to weep, to pray.

[*Exit Cassandra*

Pri. So strange and wonderful! What may she mean?
Her frown appall'd me when I would have chid,
And with an energy divinely stern,
She aw'd my spirit and inspir'd alarm.

Hec. We have not, Priam, with becoming dread,
Heard the great warning which, for ten dire years,
The Gods have published in the threats of Greece.
Our warlike sons, the heaven-built towers of Troy,

Are levell'd low, and we are all defenceless!
O must we now, who still have found in life
A flowery field, and summer path to walk,
Sustain in age, (the sun of fortune set,
And all companions far behind us dead,)
The dark mid-winter of adversity.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. The Grecian Camp

The same view as seen in Scene I. Beyond the tent of Agamemnon. The Grecian Kings, &c. assembled.

ULYSSES and AGAMEMNON.

Ulys. Like the poor rustics, when offended Ceres,
With storms untimely, interdicts their hopes,
From this long-labor'd field our men retire.

Aga. What means the counter-march? The orders were,
That every band should, with its several chief,
Defile at leisure t'ward the surfy shore,
And there abide the slacking of the breeze;
Which still at noon along the Phrygian coast,
Unfurls the white crest of the summer wave.

Ulys. And so the word was giv'n; but while the troops
Stood resting on their spears, a sudden thought,
Like inspiration, spread through all the camp,

That each led squadron, ere the embarkation,
Should, as the tribute of their last respect,
March round the tombs of the immortal slain.

Aga. The Gods bestow'd it, an auspicious omen!
Who should have wonder'd had our baffled aims
Extinguish'd in them all the pride of war?
But who, Ulysses, now remains with you?

Ulys. Sinon of Athens, whom you may remember—
He was the latest that petition'd you
To raise the siege. I think you know him, Sir:
We all admir'd that happy eloquence
With which, so modestly, he won attention.

Aga. Took he occasion in his speech to tell,
How that his helmet was a noble Trojan's,
Whom he had vanquish'd on the very spot
Where Hector slew Patroclus?

Ulys. Ay, the same—
He has a genius of surpassing skill,
In giving to the fictions of the brain
The form and seeming of realities.

Aga. But how mean you to profit by his art?

Ulys. While I, advent'rous, masqued in Trojan arms,
Mingle unnoticed with the vulgar throng,
He, as a wretch that has been left behind,
Will piteous supplicate, and fitly tell,
That holy Calchas, by Minerva taught,
Declar'd that never to the shores of Greece
Should those who sought the spoil of Troy return,
Till woody Ida had a steed produced,
Which ne'er, within the long-defended wall
Of Priam's city, should admission gain.
"*For if e'er stabled there,*" the augur says,
"*The fated Greeks, upon the land or sea,*
"*By foes or storms shall perish in exile.*"

Thus shall the horse be our Palladium deem'd.
But see the soldiers move toward the strand.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A hall in the palace of PRIAM.

A Council.

PRIAM, DEIPHOBOS, ÆNEAS, &c.

Pri. So far you are agreed. The ling'ring war
But drains the kingdom of its noblest blood,
And turns the hue of our prosperity
Into the sickly wanness of decay.
Æneas speaks not?

Æn. Oft with effort vain
Have I essay'd to rouse the public heart,
And give it sense of danger; but, alas!
Like some sad mariner, who long has strove,
With foaming waves and winds and clouded skies,
To steer his vessel from a fatal coast,
Seen by the setting sun hoar on the lea,
I sink dejected in my hopeless toil.

Deif. Have not the insolent, th' obdurate foes,
Sworn to the world that they would root us out,
And shall we talk of treaty and of terms?
We know the danger, but the remedy,
The med'cine that will renovate the state,
Is what we want.

Æn. Purge from the commonwealth
The selfish foul which deadens every heart;
The mercenary crave.—O never yet
Stood that state firm to an assailing foe,
When public zeal was kindled by the touch
Of private greed, and bloated wealth obtain'd
The homage that should wait upon renown.
Nay, look not askingly at one another,
But search your breasts, and tell us how it is
That all the flame of glory fades in Troy:—
Yes: our maternal Troy is deadly sick,
And yellow meagreness preys on her bloom;
Her eye grows heavy and her vision dim:—
Too true it is for in her bosom bred,
The hideous cancer of corruption rots;
And those embracing arms, with which she took
The injur'd nations to her fost'ring breast,
Are feebly lifted in her own defence.

[*Shouts are heard.*]

Pri. Whence come these tumults of unusual joy

[Enter ACHATES.]

Ach. The watchmen, posted on the southern wall,
Say that the gallies of the foe are launch'd,
And through the general camp appear the stir
And busy signs of hurrying departure.

Pri. The Gods of Ilion have with fate prevail'd!—
Let our contentious councils here break up,
And with the joyous and exulting throng,
Let us our grateful sacrifices pay.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A Garden.*

HECUBA and CASSANDRA.

Cass. My heart misgives, and in the general joy
Lies low and heavy. To the shouting throng
My fancy hears a dismal voice reply,
Like the gaunt echo of a hollow tomb.—
As I have sometimes seen, or thought I saw,
Death-like anatomy amidst the smiles
Of virgin beauty in its rosiest flush,
Methinks this chorus of intemperate joy
Has notes sepulchral, dread and ominous.

Hec. My sweet Cassandra, leave these sad conceits;
Quit this sequester'd haunt; awhile forego
Thy midnight vigils, lest the constant zeal
Of holy piety, too oft indulged,
With frenzy touch thy rapt religious mind.
O ye great Gods, forgive me if I sin!
Forgive the trespass of a mother's care!

Cass. Would I were dead and quietly inurn'd,
Or could dispel these waking dreams of woe.
They rise to vision like the brood of sleep,
And like the nightmare hold my thoughts entranc'd.

[Enter PRIAM and DEIFOBOS.]

Pri. Unhappy child, can nothing bring thee cheer?

Cass. O ye stern deities! whose dooming frown
Falls black and dreadful on our ancient state,
Since ye have spar'd this good old king so long,

Withhold your vengeance till his day be done.

Deif. Restrain, Cassandra, thy fantastic mind:
Partake the general joy, and share the feast,
Nor scorn the favour of the bounteous Gods:
They give the banquet, and bestow the sense
To relish pleasure; why wilt thou convert
The festal hour to sorrow and lamenting?

Cass. The festal hour! the festal hour of death!
O can maternal Hecuba forget
The staunch destruction that pursues her race,
And smile at pageants, which, like wicked spells,
Allure to ruin irretrievable!

Hec. Alas, alas, my child! thou wak'st, with more
Than mortal speech, the mother in my breast.

Pri. Forbear, Cassandra. How thy wayward taunts
Renew the anguish of thy mother's sorrow!
Ah me! what dæmon hath possess'd thee now?
Why dost thou gaze at me with eyes so wild?
What frantic fancy heaves thy lab'ring breast?
Lift not thy hands so madly to the Gods.
Is she distracted? Speak, Cassandra, speak!

Deif. Hear, dismal maniac, hear thy royal sire.

Pri. She is, alas, to her sad father's voice
As deafly dead, as to his weeping eyes
The corpse-like paleness of her face appears.
See'st thou not how thy mother stands amaz'd,
Wringing with misery her hands for thee!
Cassandra, dear Cassandra, look on us.

Hec. Alas! alas! dearest Cassandra, speak!
What image of imagin'd horror drives
The hue of life from thy dejected cheek?

Deif. Her pale lips redden, and the fearful toil
Of the rapt spirit that so strain'd her frame
Relaxes. See!

Pri. She beckons!

Deif. Hush!

Hec. She speaks.

Cass. The sign, the doing, and the deed, are one.
The trees are pregnant, and shall bring forth men.
An unbegotten steed stands in the stall.
His iron bowels bursting turn to swords,
That wreathe themselves in fires. Then all is done —
The rest is obsequy and sacrifice.

Pri. Ah me! Cassandra, wherefore speak'st thou this?
What dire phantasma breeds these rav'l'd thoughts?

Cass. The shepherd, as he guards by night his fold,
Hears from afar the stir of havoc spread;
The earth shoots meteors; on the tow'rs of Troy
Destruction, perching, flaps her wings of flame;
The seaman sees a day at midnight dawn,
Which turns the azure ocean bloody red;
The wolves on Rhodope [illegible] howl,
Craving the carnage that they shall not share;
And hungry vultures, backward darting, scream,
Scar'd by the burning from their destin'd prey.

Hec. What hideous fancy fascinates her mind!
Cassandra! O my sweet Cassandra, cease! —
That which thou look'st upon is as a dream,
An unsubstantial vapor of the brain.

Cass. [To Hec.] I see the shadows of Jove's ministers:
His wrath burns after, and throws them before.

Pri. These Pythian raptures must not be endur'd.

Cass. Away, old man. What dost thou with that robe?
Put off the crown from thy devoted head:
Trail'd and dishonor'd in the clotted mire
Shall be these sacred and anointed locks,
Which but the regal gold hath ever touch'd.
The jav'lin devious from thy palsied hand

Drops innocent from thy fierce foeman's shield,—
Now art thou down—thy grey hairs in his grasp—
Horror! horror! is it my father's doom?

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I. The Grecian Camp.

The horse should not be seen in this view.

ULYSSES.

How still and awful now this scene appears,
As if th' inert and fixed things of earth
Were with a solemn expectation seiz'd!—
Behind the island's interposing cape
The fleet has anchor'd. By this time the kings
Have told the soldiers—Should they not consent,
What then remains for me? Here I stand pledg'd
For this great stratagem. With my own fame,
A hundred brave, the chosen hearts of Greece,
Are in the hollow of the statue stak'd
Upon the use that I shall make of chance.
Grant me, omniscient Jove, as fortune shifts,
Virtue still suited to the circumstance.—
Sinon is cunning, eloquent, and shrewd—
His youth, his air, and well-concerted tale,
Cannot but prosper. Lo, the Trojans come! [*Exit.*

Enter DEIFOBOS, ÆNEAS, &c.

Deif. 'Tis a strange fancy, but most nobly form'd.
It seems to neigh as with the pride of blood,
And with the insolence of sanguine health,
To snort defiance to the front of Heav'n.
It is a most imperial feat of art,
And doubtless was for some great purpose fram'd.
Æn. The king of Ithaca, as I have heard,
On some such fabric kept his men employ'd;
And he is not a prince to wear or waste
Labor and skill on pageantries and show.—
What could his scheme intend?
Deif. Are you so rapt?
See you not how the agitated crowd
Menace the noble statue. Ha! look there!
Is not that youth whom they have seiz'd a Greek?
Let us go near—
Æn. There's mystery in this!—
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Garden.*

CASSANDRA and ACHATES.

Ach. Sure now, sweet maid, I may some hope indulge.
The fates relent, and the grim God of War
Resigns the wasted world again to Peace,
Whose cheering plough o'erfolds the bloody tract

Of his throne-shaking chariot, and her doves
Prune their white wings where his dark vultures fed.
While rag'd the siege, and each succeeding day
Brought some new sorrow to thy gentle heart,
I thought my passion would profane thy grief,
And therefore strove to keep it aw'd and still.
But, as a babe lull'd by its tender nurse,
Still grows in strength, while slumb'ring on the breast,
My love was cherish'd as it lay asleep:—
Now 'waken'd by the universal joy,
It claims its expectation.

Cass. Not unobserv'd: no: nor without a sigh
Of maiden tenderness has been thy love;—
But hapless me, of every joy forbid,
Each wish of mine is like th' unhallow'd glow
That flicker'd in the dread Medea's spells,
A cause and summons apparitional
Of horror passing name!

Ach. But now the Greeks,
No more menacing, homeward urge their flight.

Cass. Still my press'd spirit feels no fear remov'd.
Between the bow and the devoted victim,
Invisible the fatal arrow flies:—
The shaft is shot, but has not fallen yet.

Ach. Ah, dearest maid, thy mind accustom'd long
To dire mischances, and foreboding fears,
Cannot at once forego its habitude.
Come, leave with me these solitary shades,
Whose high-roof'd bowers, and intermissive light,
Would, oft frequented, make the gayest sad,
And turn the dimpled smile of rosy joy
Pale as the thoughtfulness of melancholy.

Cass. The blushing bashfulness that maidens feign,
My chaste esteem for thee disdains to use.
But O dear youth, belov'd, if I might love,—

A wild, resistless, fitful fervor, oft
Comes as a meteor in the midnight sky,
And makes my heart each dear idea yield,
As molten wax resigns the signet's form.
In vain against the impulse I contend,
And seek to shun the dismal charm in vain.
But sure as destiny, and strong as death,
It rules my fancy, bears me from myself,
And makes me dead to every social joy.
Alas! far distant from terrestrial bliss
Must my lone spirit hold its solemn watch,
To warn the coming-on of dreadful things.—
Hope thou no more—be silent and depart.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Street in Troy.*

CITIZENS.

1 *Cit.* Where is the horse?

2 *Cit.* Ent'ring the western gate.

1 *Cit.* Here let us stop and see it pass along.
The crowd still thick'ning bars all progress farther.
I never saw the throng of Troy so rife,
No, not when Hector, like a precious ruby,
Came borne in triumph, glorious with the blood
Of mighty chiefs in dreadful battle slain.
The roofs appear like pyramids of heads;
On ev'ry post and statue eager boys
In clusters hang; like flowers in vases press'd
Th' impatient ladies from the windows stretch

Their beauteous necks ; and turret, dome, and spire
Are all o'ercover'd with the human swarm.
Look, where on yon tall turret's giddy top,
One bird-like sits beside the weather-cock !
Gods! how he flutters! Oh! he loses hold—

2 *Cit.* 'Tis but the distance of his fearful height
That mocks our eyes. He only waves his cap—

1 *Cit.* Hark! how exultingly the people cheer!

2 *Cit.* The horse approaches, see it comes.

1 *Cit.* Where, where?

2 *Cit.* I saw the head pass in yon open space,
'Twixt Phœbus' temple and the palace dome.

1 *Cit.* Is it indeed so high?

2 *Cit.* Again it comes—

1 *Cit.* How vast! how haughtily, how nobly form'd!
Now let us hasten to another street.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The Garden.*

CASSANDRA.

O ye on everlasting firmness thron'd,
Tremendous and mysterious deities!
Why still with visions strange and terrible,
Must my soul languish like a flowerless plant,
That droops beneath the frown of an eclipse?
Did ye not, from your uncreated domes,
Commission Fate for all that was to be?
And come not all things as ye have decreed?

What then avail your warning oracles,
The augur's wisdom, or the prophet's ken,
Or breathed sounds of mortal penitence?—
Since all that shall be is, with you as done.—
O ease my spirit of its dreadful function,
And make me see but only life's brief scene,
Though empty all as shadow and reflex?

[Enter PRIAM.]

Pri. Why strays our dear Cassandra here alone,
When all the flow'rs that smil'd so sweet and gay,
Have doff'd their summer garbs and shrunk to rest?

Cass. O blessed instinct, that in time prepares—
The wint'ry blast may o'er them rage at will,
They in their earthy caves securely sleep,
But man, sagacious man, the sire of art,
And chronicler of Nature's every change,
Knows not the coming of adversity.

Pri. How wayward art thou! how awry in thought!
All others see, but as a type of life,
The falling leaf, the setting of the sun,
And in the crescent of the changeful moon,
The reaping sickle of our mortal hours—
Deducing thence a motive to enjoy.
But thou, in fancy sick, and still perverse,
Mak'st them forestal chance and expectancy.
All joy to thee is blasted in the bud.

Cass. Alas! it is my comfortless instinct,
To see that Heav'n, for purposes occult,
Hath turn'd the form of things so variously,
That oft to lure the destin'd on to suffer
The falsest promise ever seems the fairest.
Short-sighted mortals! Simple victims doom'd!
Vain of the wreaths that lead you to the altar.

Pri. Cassandra, cease, and check this boding grief.—
The Greeks are gone, and I have news to tell:

Their tents with all the spoil won in the war
Remain abandon'd. But what most we prize
Is a stupendous horse.

Cass. A horse ? what horse ?

Pri. A statue most magnificently wrought,
Which, as a trophy to the tomb of Hector,
The shouting populace triumphant draw.—
Ha ! how is this ? distracted girl, be calm !

Cass. Does not the breeze that through these bushes breathes,
Smell like the vapor of a charnel house ?

Pri. Merciful powers ! what hideous thoughts beset her !

Cass. Said you a horse ?

Pri. How now ! what hast thou there ?
Why turn'st thou o'er, with such delirious haste,
That legendary vellum ?

Cass. Hear me, King !
This sacred book a sireless sybil wrote,—
The eldest she of Pyrrha's earth-born race.
The leaves are dragon's skin in Styges dipp'd ;
The god-slain Python's venom serv'd for ink ;
And for a pen the mystic authoress
Did pluck the wing of that accursed bird,
Which prey'd upon Deucalion's ancestor.—
When our Palladium, which came down from heaven,
Was stol'n, these prophecies were found conceal'd,
Shrin'd in the pedestal—the juggling rhymes,
Till now, in spite of my foreboding mind,
Promis'd a fortune ever green to Troy :
But hear, last monarch of the Trojans, hear !

[*She reads.*]

" Ilion ever shall abide,
" Till a horse from Ida's side,

"Breathless breathe, and bloodless bleed—
"But nature never such shall breed."

Pri. Fye, fye, weak girl, out on such beldam lore.

Cass. I'll to the streets—O for a thunderbolt,
To crush to splinters the embodied fate.

Pri. Where would'st thou, maniac? stay, Cassandra, stay.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A Portico.*

PRIESTS, &c.

High Priest. First, strewing flowers, the children shall advance,
Then hand in hand the youths and white-rob'd maids,
Next matrons, who no loss by battle mourn,
And warriors still unhonor'd with a scar.
After in order and in due degree,
Come those who suffer'd and who still deplore
The maiming weapon or the soldier's doom.
Great Hector's widow shall proceed alone.
The victim next with garlands ye shall bring;
And with glad touch let every lyre awake,
Symphonious to the choral hymns of peace;
As to the fane of all the Gods we go.

The Procession.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The Grecian Camp. Night.*

ULYSSES and AGAMEMNON.

Ulys. The moon is down, but all the clouded skies
Are brighten'd with the festal fires of Troy.—
Halt! who goes there?

Aga. Ulysses, and alone!

Ulys. How stand the troops?

Aga. Impatient to begin.
Where is the horse?

Ulys. Safe in his stable stall'd.
The Gods are with us and the work must thrive.

Aga. But how did you succeed?

Ulys. As from the shore
The fleet departed, swarming from the town
The populace came rushing to the camp,
And grasp'd the spoil that scatter'd lay around.
Sinon, discover'd soon, was quickly seiz'd,
But pled release with such impressive art,
That I myself was touch'd with soft remorse,
And sigh'd subdued by pity.—Thence he told
The fable of the horse, and all as one
The cred'lous citizens with shouts resolv'd
To draw the statue home. But, strange to tell,
A prodigy of awful omen seem'd
To interdict their suicidal purpose.—
The priest Laocoon with his sons was there,
And, full of some protecting god of Troy,
Utter'd a direful and prophetic ban
On all that dar'd to move the horse away.
But while he stood in fervent declamation,

Forth from the sea two twinlike serpents came,
And through the aw'd receding multitude,
Together rolling held their hideous way,
To where the sire and his two helpless sons
Stood fascinated to a dreadful end.
Just as Laocoon rais'd his hands to heaven,
The serpents both, as with one instinct mov'd,
Sprang on the youths and darting at the sire,
That grasp'd to rescue, held the three entwin'd
In writhing agony —Astonish'd, all
Trembling beheld the hungry monsters feed.
Nor did our shudd'ring consternation cease,
Till, surfeited with their atrocious meal,
The snakes regain'd the sea, and nothing left
But bloody wreck of limbs.

Aga. Horrible doom!

Ulys. Then by mirac'lous inspiration taught,
I cried, and all the fated rabble join'd,
That Neptune had th' avenging serpents sent
To crush Laocoon in his blasphemy.

Aga. Infatuated race.

Ulys. At which the horse,
With simultaneous strength they haul'd along;
Broke down the walls for entrance, and in triumph
Convey'd it to the bosom of the town.
When near the palace, Priam's pious daughter
Came wildly out: her hair, dishevell'd, flying,
And in her frantic hand a jav'lin gleaming.
Loudly she clamor'd to destroy the statue,
And struck her weapon furious in its side.
A groan was heard: but, doom'd this night to perish,
The Trojans mock'd the royal sybil's zeal,
And all exulting urged their fate along.

Aga. What means yon waving torch upon the tower?

Ulys. 'Tis Sinon's signal for us to approach. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The Temple.*

PRIESTS, PRIAM, DEIFOBOS, &c. &c.

II. Priest. Rejoice, rejoice, a miracle appears!
The victim's heart is firm compacted bone;
Impenetrable to the severing knife,
As to the foe has stood the Trojan state!—
Laud ye the gods; and thou, O sire of Troy,
The wonted off'ring from the chalice pour.

[PRIAM *takes the chalice.*]

Pri. All-ruling Thund'rer, sublimest Jove!
And all ye dread Olympian powers, that guide
The orbs of fate in their eternal round,
Accept the sacrifice that here we pay.—
Ten years of vengeful war, ten years of woe,
Have roll'd o'er Ilion in succession dire,
And sorrow quench'd our joy, and hope seem'd dead.
But ye command the raging storm to cease,
Disperse the clouds, and with assuring omen,
Give us the promise of the halcyon time.—

II. Pri. Ha! look, see where the wild Cassandra comes,
As with demoniac energy possess'd!

Enter CASSANDRA.

Cass. Hold, victim, hold—the gods point down and smile
When mortals sacrifice, or dare to thank—
Though all your herds were slain; though hecatombs
O'ertopp'd the high cloud-crested Ida's height;
Though your libations flow'd a fuller stream

Than issues from the copious Hellespont;
Yea, though the forests of a hundred hills,
In conflagration lick'd the vault of heaven,
The gods unmov'd would still demand from Fate
The greater sacrifice that Greece prepares.

H. Pri. Forbear, forbear, nor mar our solemn rites.
The heavens by wond'rous augury declare
The strong-built safety of the Trojan state.
Behold the heart; 'tis incompressible,
Unyielding bone, firm as our ancient towers.

Cass. Portentous similarity of Troy!—
The heart was dead while yet the victim liv'd!
Away thou palt'ring priest! Dar'st thou pervert
The plain avouch of oracles divine?

H. Pri. Strike all your lyres, and chant your holiest hymn,
Nor let her blasphemies amaze the gods.

[*Music plays and a peal of thunder is heard.*]

Cass. Silence, ye doom'd. Hear ye how kindling Jove
Bids the vast thunder drown your twangling strings.
Methinks they clank of slavery and chains!

H. Pri. Avaunt, avaunt, thou sacrilegious, hence!
The heavens are wroth to see their rites profan'd—
Heed her not, Priam, but the chalice pour
Ere yet the flame upon the altar die.

[*Priam pours the wine upon the altar.*]

Cass. Blood! blood! 'tis blood that shall the ashes quench,
Thine, father, thine—O must I live to see!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Chamber.*

CASSANDRA.

'Tis now the black and deadest hour of night,
And all the city, like a fetter'd victim,
Lies helpless bound in sleep. Must I alone
Ne'er know the sweet oblivious pause again,
But ever, while the corp'ral sense is shut,
Be doom'd to feel the presence of Hereafter.

[Enter HECUBA.]

Hec. Alas, Cassandra!

Cass. What! my mother here!

Hec. O I have caught the horror of thy thoughts.
Sleep shuns my couch, or brings such fantasies
As augurs dread! Methinks the night, as 'twere,
Wraps with a double fold of gloom, the skies,
And men are seiz'd with most unnat'ral drowze.
Through all the palace mimic death prevails;
Even the sentinel that guards the king,

Heard not my treading as I pass'd along:
But fast in fatal sleep, leant on his spear.

Cass. The guard asleep! while by great Priam's couch
Death whets his mighty scythe! Why came you here?

Hec. Methought I heard the cry of fire afar,
And presently the wild shrill shriek of one
Snatch'd suddenly by Fate:—Anon arose
Tumultuous murmurs, and the clash of arms.

Cass. Dreamt you all this!—Hark, list, hear ye not that?—
'Tis done, 'tis done! In Heav'n's eternal roll
The Trojan name is blotted out with blood!

Hec. I will alarm the guards—What dost thou see?
Aught here?

Cass. Now, now Destruction tramples fierce,
And Havoc to the shoulder bares his arms
For dreadful occupation—

Hec. Oh Cassandra!
Hark! how the tumults near!

Cass. What sounds are these?

Hec. Tear back the lattice-screen.

Cass. Alas! alas!

Hec. Horror! Horror! the Grecian shouts of war!
Priam, awake! Guards, guards! sleep not to death!

Cass. Troy is no more!—Priam, awake to die!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Street.*

AGAMEMNON, ULYSSES, &c.

Ulys. The cry is general, and the guards are rous'd·

But through the broken wall our soldiers pour
Still a resistless deluge.

Aga. Where is Menelaus?

Ulys. Gone with a squadron of the Spartan troops
To Helen's house—

Aga. And where does Pyrrhus fight?

Ulys. He and the warriors of the horse, increas'd
By fifteen hundred of the Argive bands,
Still in the citadel.

Aga. What part take you?

Ulys. The darkness makes confusion in our work.—
Mine be the task, if Agamemnon wills,
To fire the domes of Troy.

Aga. The Gods to you
Have giv'n the providence that rules to-night.

Uly. Each of my men bears, fasten'd to his spear,
A brand prepared.

Aga. O prescient chief,
'Tis thus you ever chance anticipate.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Hall.*

PRIAM, HECUBA, and CASSANDRA.

Hec. O fond old man! to think thy palsied arm,
Which but the spasm of despair has nerv'd,
Might wield again the sword.—Stay, Priam, stay,
Let younger valor breast th' o'erwhelming war,
Nor in the rave and madness of alarm,
Vaunt things impossible.—Alas! alas!
I will not, will not, Priam, quit my hold.—

O never fiction was by poet feign'd,
So baseless as this dotage dream of valor!—
What! hoar Paralysis! dar'st thou assail
The fire and wrath ferocities of Greece,
And yet cannot resist the feeble catch
Of one so wither'd and so weak as I?

Pri. Unhand me, woman—Hecuba, away—
It suits not monarchs in the storms of Fate
To shrink appall'd. The Trojans call their king.

[*Voices without.*]

The king, the king! Will not the king appear?

Hec. They cannot call thee into youth again;
Nor all the fury of the Greeks in Troy
Restore thy shrivel'd frailty into strength.—
But if thou think'st that aught of thine can aid,
Down on thy knees—Spread thy grey hair to Heav'n,
Kneel here with me, and raise thy pithless arms.
Behold, ye safe possessors of the sky,
Two old, infirm, defenceless creatures here!—
Oh art thou gone! [*Exit Pri.*

Cass. Was it the nightmare's spell
That held me powerless to prevent his flight?
Oh!—But I will not stir her back to grief;
This pause in life is to her suff'ring rest.
Thy bosom, universal parent, Earth,
Is ever open to thy hapless children;
There we lie hush'd, and all our troubles cease.

[Enter ACHATES.]

How now, unhappy! wherefore com'st thou here?
This is the house of Misery and Death!

Ach. Alas, dear maid, I am but as a ghost—
Awhile permitted in the world to roam,
And such a haunt befits my hopeless state.

Hec. O Priam, Priam!—but thou art away,

O never, never, never to return!
Thy arm, Cassandra,—What, art thou too here!
Can'st thou be spar'd from that extremest toil,
Which needed Priam's frail effectless aid!—
If there be hope, why hast thou come to us?

Ach. Alas, I came but to protect—

Cass. Protect!

Ach. Divine Cassandra! though my faithful heart
Presumes no more, it still as fondly beats—
I may not live, but I can die for thee.

Hec. Hark, hark, they come—

[PRIAM *without.*] *The gates, the gates give way,*
Close up the portal, build it with the dead.

Hec. Sure we can fight, yea, cleave the air as well
And with as deadly strength as frantic Priam.
I held him here with these grandmother hands,
And 'twas but while I pray'd that he escap'd—
Canst thou, who hast the front of youth, keep in,
While tottering Age attempts to lift the sword?—
I will myself go seek the bedlamite.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Street.*

MENELAUS, HELEN, &c.

Men. Bear the adultress to my brother's ship.—
Let me not see her, lest those cursed charms,
Which have so long the bane of nations prov'd,
Mar the stern purpose of my soul to-night.

[*Helen is conducted off.*

Now fire the building. Stand! What men are these?

Enter AGAMEMNON.

Aga. On, brother, on, to where yon rising fires
Kindle the night. There Pyrrhus and Ulysses
Disperse the mustering foes; who, half awake,
With mail unbrac'd, and arms confus'dly seized,
Attempt to join.

Men. Behold, at last, Revenge
Hath sheath'd my falchion in a rival's blood.
This was his mansion, and is now his pyre,
And Helen is redeem'd.

Aga. Advance, advance.—
Another time will serve for gratulation.

[*Exit Menelaus,* &c.

Enter ULYSSES.

Ulys. The Trojan soldiers, by Æneas rous'd,
Work miracles of warfare. All the town
Is now abroad, and Slaughter and Dismay
Raging, career triumphant o'er the throng.
The gallant Pyrrhus and his band, like wolves
Around the shepherd's fold, beset the palace.
Wild, on the walls the frantic women run,
And, like the demon-hags of Tartarus,
Shower on our men the missiles of despair,
With burning rafters, and tormenting fires:
The very wrecks of Priam's royalty
Are hurl'd vindictive on us.

Aga. Is Priam there?

Ulys. I cannot tell. The gate was nearly forc'd,
When, with a hideous passion all inflam'd,
The madding Trojans snatch'd their bleeding dead,
And with the havoc chok'd the yawning portal:
The wounded were not spar'd! but rashly seiz'd,
And flung promisc'ously among the dead.

Aga. Hark! 'tis the voice of Pyrrhus.

Ulys. Soldiers, on.
The rising flames to our avenging toil
Bestow a suitable, but dismal day.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter PRIAM, &c.

Pri. Sleeps yet my son, and all the Greeks in Troy!
Knock at his door. Awake! rise, sluggard, rise!
Heav'n for our crimes no less atonement claims
Than this great sacrifice that burns around.

Enter ARBATES.

Arb. O gracious sire! approach no farther here;
Murder has lav'd the chambers, and the roof
Sinks down beneath the gloomy press of fires.—
Scarce had our household to their rest retired,
When in the street a murmuring noise arose.
Full soon the sound brought each affrighted wretch
To his sad destiny. I saw descend
The Grecian confident that came with Helen—
Soft were his steps, and in one hand a lamp,
Whose flame was screen'd within his other palm.

Pri. Accursed traitor!

Arb. Then I started up;
For oft before a fearful vigilance
Haunted my thoughts, and I had mark'd at times
A wicked purpose brooding in his eye.
His Spartan mistress met him in the dark.
Then heard I speaking deep and vehement;
And suddenly, with shouts, a furious band
Of ruffian Greeks came rushing through the porch.
What then ensued nor tongue nor speech can tell.

Pri. None to assist! None! none!

Arb. Our gen'rous lord,
Unarm'd, and in the night's defenceless garb,

Unclos'd his chamber. Instantly and fierce,
As the fell tiger grasps the helpless fawn,
Remorseless Menelaus—

Pri. O my poor boy!
Could not the Gods but for a little while
Have spar'd Deifobos, last of my sons,
To aid his wretched father in this need!
O ye stern Fates, that sit yourselves secure,
Why is the blow so long withheld from me?
Strike, strike at once; make not a poor old man
The toy and pastime of your tyranny.

Enter ÆNEAS.

Æn. Why stand you weeping, Sir? Each street and lane
The furious enemy impetuous sweeps,
And will surround you here. Beyond the walls
The people rally, and there is yet hope.

Pri. No, no, Æneas; Priam's fate is full.
By thee, perchance, the Pow'rs averse to me
May save the relics of the Trojan race.—
Away, away! How dare ye fight for me?
Have not the Gods deserted Priam? What!
Will ye against their high resolves rebel?
Here let me die, a desolate old man,
Who, in the hoary, helpless end of life,
Beggars calamity of every woe.
Nay, touch me not- I will not be remov'd.

Enter FIRST CITIZEN.

1 *Cit.* Help, Trojans, help! The palace gates are storm'd,
The guards are butcher'd, and the Queen alone,
In rash distraction clamors from the tower;
But no one comes to aid.

Pri. Poor Hecuba!
Liv'st thou to this? We have grown old together.
Give me my sword. I will myself assist.

Æn. It is too late—all striving there is vain—

Let us retire to where the people arm,
Before the bloodhounds scent that last retreat.
Around the palace all the Greeks combine.

Pri. Get you away; I am no more a king—
I am a husband! Hecuba, I come.

Enter SECOND CITIZEN.

2 Cit. Prepare, prepare! the Greeks, the Greeks approach.

[*The Greeks enter, and fight with the Trojans. Priam goes off at the one side. The Trojans are driven away by the Greeks, who follow Priam. The Trojans re-enter and pursue, but soon after return with Æneas from the same side that Priam retired.*]

Æn. On to the shore with all ye hold most dear.
Th' insatiate foes, like their destroying fires,
Grow fiercer as they plunder. Hope is gone!
O hapless Troy! my native land, farewell!
To distant regions, and in climes unknown,
Must we dejected roam, and with the dole
Of foreign charity mix ceaseless tears.

SCENE V. *Vaults under the Palace.*

CASSANDRA.

Here, will I wait the blow of destiny
Resign'd and calm. How Ruin drives without!
The awful temples of the Gods are fired,
And the proud dome of royalty become
A raging furnace and a slaughter-house.
How dreadful is the casting down of thrones!

The mighty wreck o'erwhelms the living age:—
To the far limits of posterity
Resounds the great concussion.
A solemn fortitude in this dire hour
Sustains my spirit; and though oft the drop
Of fond affection rushes o'er my sight,
(The filial tribute of a mournful child)
A holier sentiment pervades my heart,
Which owns the vengeance of high Heaven deserv'd.

Enter HECUBA.

Hec. The gates are forced. O'er us the palace burns—
The halls and galleries, with dead and dying,
Are changed to catacombs all foul and grim,
And down the stairs gush cataracts of blood.
Canst thou, Cassandra, bear a stedfast mind
Amidst the falling of the Trojan state?

Cas. Long, long, dear mother, has my soul's sad vision
Beheld the low'ring of this fatal night;
And now, when all its horrors rage around,
The Trojan ruins burning, and the skies
Furling asunder, that the Gods may view
Their dreadful warrants rig'rously fulfill'd,
It seems but as a pageant of the stage.

Hec. Came not thy father here? Where, where is Priam?
Is he alive? Has he escap'd? He yet
May gather the dispersed guards, and save—
Ill-boding prophetess, shake not thy head.
O if thou art in favor with the powers
Whose fellest energies are all abroad,
Make intercession. If thou canst indeed
Read the portents and auguries of Fate,
Find me some hope. You turn, and will not speak.
Ye irresponsible divinities,
Made ye not me, in wanton tyranny,
A queen, a wife, a mother? What am I?

Do not the Heavens, sybil, when they doom
Wretches to misery, commit a crime?

[*Heard from without.*]

Aga. Forbear! forbear! it is the King ye strike.
Ulys. O spare him, spare!
Cas. Alas! alas! alas!
Pri. Hecuba! Hecuba!
Hec. I come, I come.

[*Exeunt Cassandra and Hecuba.*]

Ulys. Stop, Pyrrhus, stop, respite the poor old man.
Aga. O drag him not.
Ulys. *Kill, rather kill.*
Aga. *He dies.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *A View of the City burning.*

On the one side a porch, towards which the Greeks, headed by Agamemnon, are advancing, when Cassandra appears.

CASSANDRA, AGAMEMNON, &c.

Aga. Onward, ye brave, and finish your great tasks.
Priam is slain, and Troy burns bright and high.
Enter and spoil.
Cass. Presumptuous victor, halt,
Nor dare to enter here.
Aga. Ha! what art thou,
Fiend from the deep, or goddess from the sky,
That stops the Greek victorious at the goal?

Cass. Brand of the Gods, fell agent of their ire,
Doom'd in thy turn to feel their fiercest hate,
Intrude not here thy sacrilegious tread.
This is the tomb of royal Hecuba;
Dar'st thou the awful sanctu'ry profane?
Ev'n now I see, for that thou didst but think
To pass the porch of this sublime abode,
This last sepulchral refuge of the Queen,
The direst furies that career to-night
Gloating survey thee as their destin'd prey.
Avaunt, devoted! Smiling Guilt prepares
The secret ponia'd, or the mingled bowl,
To welcome thy return. Hence, dead man, hence!

THE END.

NOTE ON THE PROPHETESS.

The author of this drama seems to have chosen "The tale of Troy divine," on account of the facilities which the subject afforded for exhibiting the workings of the prophetic spirit. In estimating the merits of the piece, it is, therefore, less requisite to consider how the fate of Priam and his capital is represented, than the way in which Cassandra is made to act and speak—She is the central figure in the picture: all the other characters are subordinate to her; even the city in flames, and the parting of Hecuba and Priam, are but incidents introduced to show the metaphysical peculiarities of this character.

There is not in the plot of "THE PROPHETESS" the slightest pretence to invention. The author evidently rests the interest of his drama on the dialogue, and on his selection of incidents, which might have happened at the sack of Troy. Nor, in the delineation of the characters, can he lay claim to any inventive merit: he can only be compared to a painter, who makes a drawing from the story of the Iliad and Æneid. He has given us his conception of particular persons whom Homer and Virgil

have described, and his work should therefore be estimated by inquiring how far the sentiments and conduct which he ascribes to the different characters are conformable to the original models. To institute an investigation of this kind, would exceed the limits which we have prescribed to our critical sketches: indeed, upon such a thesis, we may well be excused from giving any opinion, because the partiality of the world is so justly strong in favor of Homer and Virgil, that every attempt to re-embody their heroes will generally be regarded as the height of human presumption, although acknowledged excellence, in all other things, is at once the reason of imitation, and the excuse for its defects. In the arts of Painting and Sculpture, the students are directed to copy the master-works of the greatest artists. Is there any reason why the same rule should not govern in the study of Poetry? The endeavours of English poets to imitate the metres of the Greek and Latin verse have only provoked ridicule—and justly; for proper imitation does not consist in working with the same instruments by which the model was formed, but in essays to produce the same effects. Without, however, offering any opinion as to the particular merits of "THE PROPHETESS," we may be allowed to say, that we think the Author ought not to be accused of presumption, in making choice of models that are regarded as the standards of poetical excellence.

But although we feel diffidence in speaking of the execution, we have none in drawing the attention of our readers to the plan of the piece.—It is properly a Melo-drama, and ought not to have been called a Tragedy. In tragedy and comedy the final event is the effect of the moral operations of the different characters, but in the melo-drama the catastrophe is the physical result of mechanical stratagem. In the "PROPHETESS" it is neither the predict-

ions of Cassandra, nor the effects of anger, revenge, or any other passion in any of the other characters, that leads to the destruction of Troy. We see that the event might have been the same, although the author had made choice of another set of persons. He might even have made a farcical representation of the last night of Troy! In other words, he might have given only the ludicrous incidents, which probably attended the introduction of the Horse; and exhibited only occurrences founded on that excess of fear which is always ridiculous; and which, even amidst the awful circumstances of a metropolis sinking in flames, undoubtedly must, in some instances, have taken place. But in the regular drama this could not be done, because in regular tragedy the catastrophe affects only the persons of the drama, and is the result of the moral causes by which the characters were actuated during the progress of the piece.

THE MASQUERADE,

A Comedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

Lord Waryford.
Lady Waryford.
Sir Thomas Sylvan.
Miss Negative, Sister to Sir Thomas.
Miss Sylvan, Daughter to Sir Thomas.
Mr. Sylvan, Son to Sir Thomas.
Count La Cour, a French Emigrant.
Miss Kitty, Niece to Sir Thomas and Miss Negative.
Mr. Argent, Nephew to Sir Thomas and Miss Negative.
Sparker, Valet to Lord Waryford.
Mr. Volume, a Reviewer.

Servants.

THE MASQUERADE;

A Comedy.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Library. Lord and Lady Waryford sitting at a Table; his Lordship reading a Newspaper.*

LORD W. Fashion, like the wheel of a spendthrift's curricle, though ever in constant motion, is still only doing the same thing. The very theatres are as dull as if Apollo and the Muses had never been. They seem to rival each other only in trying which shall produce the silliest show at the greatest expense. We have had nothing good from them since they burnt themselves; but even in that, the sterility of modern talent was demonstrated. While Covent-Garden was yet sitting in ashes, Drury-Lane got up the Conflagration still more magnificently, and there was a rumor that the Opera-House had the same spectacle in

preparation. The Pantheon also made an attempt, but it was very injudicious, and did not succeed. However, I see that there is yet some principle of variety not extinct. To what particular action of it, Angelica, do I owe the rare honor of your company in this apartment?

Lady W. I am to be at home to-night.

Lord W. What! were you not at home last night? O fye!

Lady W. Pshaw! Waryford. It is my masquerade.

Lord W. True! the papers have just been telling me of the preparations; preparations, they say, of the most magnificent description. What a happy age we live in! Routs, balls, and lighted rooms, candelabras, cut glass, and throats cut, interspersed with a few anecdotes of kingdoms desolated, make up the matter of our daily knowledge. And so I am indebted, for the pleasure of your Ladyship's company, to the lamp-lighters and other artists, as they are called, at work in the drawing-rooms. Well: masquerades, and all sorts and kinds of public amusements in private houses, are surely very conjugal contrivances, since thus they bring man and wife together.

Lady W. But will you assume any character?

Lord W. Have you not designed a very particular one for me already?

Lady W. Come, come, don't be petulant, Augustus. What character will you take? Do exert yourself, and try something.

Lord W. Perhaps I may enact Cato.

Lady W. An excellent idea.

Lord W. But not the Roman fool; no; the other Cato, who sometimes lent his wife to his friends.

Lady W. Is it possible? Can you be jealous?

Lord W. Jealous? No, Angelica; Jealousy is the offspring of Love, and the dead do not procreate. Poor

Cupid was crushed to death beneath a lawyer's seal; his winding-sheet is made of written vellum, and his coffin is a chartulary wherein he lies forgotten.

[Enter LA COUR and SYLVAN.]

How are ye, Sylvan? Count, I'm glad to see you. [*Lord W. takes the Count apart.*] A word, La Cour. Have you seen the papers this morning? Did you notice a paragraph about my wife?

La Cour. It is an intolerable libel, my Lord—false and malignant—I know it is.

Lord W. You were the author, then?

La Cour. What I, my Lord?

Lord W. Poh, I did but jest, seeing you so emphatic. I do not like any thing said with an emphasis; it is like Italics in print, or underlineation in writing, and always means more than meets the ear.

La Cour. The papers are the pests of civilized society. You English boast of your freedom, but a man can do nothing in London without the risk of seeing it published.

Lord W. The newspapers in this respect may be called the Gods of Police; but, Count, you may do as much good as you please without being afraid of them. Pray how have you happened to bring Sylvan with you? It is to him that the paragraph alludes.

La Cour. I do not think it points at him.

Lord W. No?

La Cour. He has come to invite her Ladyship to visit his sister.

Lord W. When do you go, Angelica?

Lady W. Go where?

Lord W. To visit Miss Sylvan.

Lady W. What do you mean?

Lord W. Not to-day?

Lady W. [*To Sylvan.*] Is your sister in town?

Sylv. The family came last night.

Lord W. Take an advice, Count—never assign motives to the actions of your friends. But, Angelica, show us those mighty preparations of which the journals give such note.

Sylv. Your Lordship likes a masquerade.

Lord W. Of all things; particularly when the unmasquing is near.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A drawing room in Sir Thomas Sylvan's house.*

MISS KITTY and ARGENT. *Kitty dressed as a girl, with a doll.*

Arg. You are early dressed for the masquerade.

Miss Kit. Have you not heard that our philosophical aunt has taken it into her head that there is a great risk of the world being over-peopled. By way of counteracting the danger, she is endeavouring to make me relapse into childhood, until I shall become as little likely as herself of adding to the mass of suffering mankind.

Arg. And can you submit to so ridiculous a metamorphosis?

Miss Kit. It cannot last beyond the day, and I am diverted by the whim; for, in attempting to consider me as a child, she affords me an opportunity of amply indemnifying myself, by treating her with the petulance of one.

Arg. I wish you would rather think of going with me to Scotland. We may easily escape unobserved, this evening, from Lady Waryford's masquerade.

Miss Kit. No more of that, Jack. No woman who aspires to be honored as a wife, will be guilty of an elopement. My uncle is not very obstinate in his prejudices, and my cousin and Farmly are too much interested in one another to give us any uneasiness. But see, my aunt is coming; get you out of the way, and I will take occasion, from your sudden departure, to plague her.

[*Exit Argent.*

MISS KITTY *sings.*

My Dolly is a pretty babe,
She neither sulks nor cries;
Her cheeks are like two ripe cherries,
And she has charming eyes.

O lovely doll, my darling doll,
Most beauteous to behold;
So sweet, so neat, so very complete,
I never can thee scold.

Enter MISS NEGATIVE.

Miss Neg. Cunning toad! She thinks that I did not see him, plying the sophistry of nature to subvert my philosophical experiment. Did I not tell you that you were not to speak to your cousin Jack in my absence?

Miss Kit. O! he's a most delicious creature, and is so enamored of me, you can't think.

Miss Neg. Has he the assurance?

Miss Kit. That he has; and he says I am a goddess, and he so kissed me!

Miss Neg. How durst you open your mouth to him?

Miss Kit. La! aunt, one doesn't open one's mouth when one's kissed. But perhaps you never were kissed, and so don't know the way on't.

Miss Neg. You are a naughty child.

Miss Kit. I am no child—I'll not be a child any more, My uncle has brought me here to London town, for Mr. Farmly to make love to me, because he wishes my sweetheart, cousin Jack, to marry cousin Nell; and so I'll be a child no more, nor nurse this good-for-nothing doll. Out on the creature—I'll break every bone in its body.

[*She flings away the doll; Miss Negative takes it up.*]

Miss Neg. Fie, fie, see how you have broken its nose.

Miss Kit. It don't cry, and so can't be hurt.

Miss Neg. Come, come, take poor dolly.

Miss Kit. I won't; that's flat. I am going to take up my degrees. I'll be Kitty no longer; but Miss Katherina at your service, Miss Negative. I'll go to the play-house, and see all the sights—I'll pay for a look at the Regency—they say as how its arms are not like any mortal man's, but that its right is a lion, and its left a rampant unicorn.

Miss Neg. Audacious impudence; out of my sight.

[*Exit Kitty.*

How vexatiously does nature perplex the wisdom of philosophical purposes! But perseverance can accomplish much—What's the matter, brother?

[Enter SIR THOMAS SYLVAN.]

Sir T. What's the matter! The gardener writes me that on the very day we left Sylvan-hall, some malicious monster nipp'd out all the stamins of my tulips, and that I shall have no seed this season. I had set my heart on having a bushel; by which, in the course of a few years, my tulip-beds should have rival'd the seraglio of the Grand Turk, but instead of Sultanas I have got only eunuchs.

Miss Neg. Thanks to the genius of the great Linnæus, for teaching me to mar in embryo this wicked and preposterous design! Brother, if your tulips had run to seed, and in each succeeding year the like had been permitted, England must have speedily been converted into a bed

of flowers, and what would then have become of the human race? I glory in the good that I have done to posterity by the mutilation of your tulips.

Sir T. Was it you that did it?

Miss Neg. Yes: It was I that did it!

Sir T. She's mad!

Miss Neg. O brother, brother, how often must I repeat that you are no philosopher—The principles of political œconomy are above your comprehension. I must direct my discourse to topics, better suited to your humble capacity.—Whatever injury you may inflict on the world, by precipitating the marriage of your daughter, I have resolved to assert the claims of reason, and the prerogatives of an aunt, in the disposal of our niece Katherine; and, therefore, I intend that she shall not be married until she has reached an age beyond conception—Thus evincing the philanthropy of the true utilitarian principles, by preventing, so far, an overstock of population.

Sir T. Fiddle faddle—you are always at population; never two moons mad alike. Some time ago you took it into your head that man was perfectible, and that there was, consequently, no limit to the improvement of things, and therefore that in time we should have turnips as big as stage coaches, pigs like elephants, partridges as large as cassowaries, and that the pot would boil of its own voluntary resolution. Now your phrenzy has taken another turn; and last week you had the poor cat hanged for being brought to bed of an extra kitten. In its place, you have taken an italianized devil, that does nothing all day but bask in the sun among my flowers, purring at the roses, as if the creature really had a genius for poetical adulation: but, by the floral games, and eleusynian mysteries, I'll shoot the son of a tabby.

Miss Neg. Weak brother!

[*Exeunt.*

[*As they go off on the one side, Miss Sylvan enters from the other.*]

Miss SYLVAN, *sola.*

And so for three reasons my sage papa says that I must wed my cousin Argent—a youth at college, my younger by a year. First, he is well grown, and handsome,—good commendable qualities in a husband; but so is Farmly, and the properest fellow of the two. Your first reason, papa, has no persuasion in't: The second, his father is prodigiously rich, and an honor to the country, being an alderman. Farmly is rich enough, and is himself an honor to the country, being an independent country gentleman. An alderman against a gentleman; nay, only the son of an alderman—Mon père your first reason was better than this. Thirdly, and lastly, the match would be most advantageous. How? to whom? in what way? To the Sylvan family: the dead and the unborn! O ancestors, blanketted in lead, will it be any comfort to you? But here comes that silly 'squire, my fashionable brother.

Enter SYLVAN.]

Well, George, how is Lady Waryford?

Syl. Divinely! the finest woman in town! It will make you of great consequence to be often with her.

Miss Syl. Indeed! It no doubt adds much to yours that you are so often with her?

Syl. Certainly, it does.

Miss Syl. A great honor, truly, to be thought of, much in the same way as her ladyship's lapdog.

Syl. You talk as innocently as if your godmother had been a fairy—But Lady Waryford expects you to spend the afternoon with her; and she comes to invite you.

[Enter LADY WARYFORD.]

Lady W. My dear Helen, I hope your brother has succeeded, and that I shall have the pleasure of your company all this afternoon: we shall be quite alone till the evening.

Miss Syl. Your ladyship must excuse me for declining so great an honor.

Lady W. Have you heard then what scandal dares to say?

Miss Syl. I have.

Lady W. It is beneath me, my dear friend, to notice calumny but as it disturbs Lord Waryford, it is my duty to prove how false it is.

Miss Syl. I shall be most happy if you can do so.

Lady W. But you must assist me.

Miss Syl. In what way?

Lady W. By allowing me to have as much of your company as possible.

Syl. The world would then be convinced that there is no truth in the imputation.

Miss Syl. I am too obscure a personage to take Lady Waryford's reputation under my protection.

Syl. You are rude, Helen.

Lady W. I cannot blame her—but, my dear Miss Sylvan, there is not a particle of truth in the story: and the frankness of my declaration should convince you of my innocence.

Miss Syl. Would it not be quite as well if my brother were to abstain from visiting your ladyship?

Lady W. The thing has been too publicly circulated to allow of such an arrangement. It might be said that his visits were forbidden by my lord.

Miss Syl. Or that he was tired of your ladyship?

Syl. Helen, Helen!

Miss Syl. Your invitation is confessedly for a particular purpose: it is therefore proper that I should consider how far I can, with propriety, take any part in the plot.

Syl. This insolence is not to be endured.

Lady W. Be you quiet—Miss Sylvan is right if she suspect us.

Miss Syl. And he is very bad if there be any cause. Give me time to think of this, and your ladyship shall have my answer before dinner.

Lady W. At all events I expect you at Waryford House in the evening.

Miss Syl. I shall be ruled by circumstances.

Lady W. O you must come—till then, at farthest, adieu, my dear friend.

Miss Syl. Adieu.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Library in Waryford House.*

Count La Cour and Lady Waryford.

La Cour. You must be cautious and vigilant as Argus. Who could have thought that the listless Waryford should have been so roused by the sneer of a newspaper gossip? You must abandon Sylvan.

Lady W. There is no danger—this energy in Waryford is like the effect of galvanism, a twitch in the eye and a start in the limb, but the subject is dead. Trust me, La Cour, Sylvan has no interest in my heart; but while he helps my pecuniary wants, it is fair that he should have something for his money, and the vain creature is content with familiar notice.

La Cour. But consider the value of your reputation: he may not always be content with empty smiles: he may ask what the world believes he has already.

Lady W. That thought implies a doubt of my affection,

Can you, who are so dear to me, so doubt of my fidelity?

La Cour. Think not of me—think only of yourself.—Lord Waryford is not the sort of easy man that I thought he was—His quickness this morning has alarmed me—His indifferency is, I fear, negligence, not indolence. He has often threatened you with a separation—Such an event, at this time, would be as fatal as a divorce.

Lady W. How? In what way could it affect your place in my affection?

La Cour. You would be excluded from the world—shut out from all those friends, on whose profitable acquaintance I chiefly depend. I cannot, Angelica, afford to deal with damaged quality. The purse grows light as the reputation fails, and the stinted stipends of second-hand wives afford nothing for a poor dog like me. But see, your husband is coming this way, and we must be speaking of other things.—No, it will not do; that character is not suitable to the appearance of your Ladyship.

[Enter LORD WARYFORD.]

Come in the crisis of debate, my Lord. I am in vain attempting to convince your Countess, that the character which she speaks of assuming this evening will not suit her Ladyship.

Lord W. Pray what is it?

Lady W. I was thinking of the vestal.

Lord W. You! you a vestal! No, no, that will indeed not suit. The Count is a man of taste. Take Calista rather, it would be much better.

La Cour. Aye, the fair penitent.

Lord W. Would she could act it well!

La Cour. Or Cleopatra.

Lord W. Fie, Count, O fie! to think that her Ladyship would play the part of a faithless——Better understood

than described. But, Count, what character take you yourself?

La Cour. My old blue domino must serve again.

Lady W. Do, for goodness' sake, get another—you have looked blue long enough.

Lord W. That was a poor pun, love. But, La Cour, to please her Ladyship, you shall have a new one. What colour shall it be?

Lady W. Red, Count, let it be red.

Lord W. To help the blushes of his gratitude.

La Cour. Your Lordship is witty to-day.

Lady W. I cannot suffer this any longer. La Cour, your arm.

Lord W. Shall it be scarlet?

La Cour. As you please.

Lord W. [*whispers La Cour.*] Find out what disguise Sylvan comes in.

La Cour. Depend on me.

[*Exeunt Lady W. and La Cour.*

Lord W. A precious pair!

[*Exit Lord W.*

SCENE II. *A Room.*

VOLUME *solus.*

What shall I do? The life of a reviewer is, alas! far from being a safe one. My back has scarcely yet forgotten the horse-whipping, which I received from an enraged uthor, for a libel, which, in a malicious moment, I had unfortunately written. The same cruel wretch has de-

prived me of half the pleasures of life, by threatening to publish the affair. I dare not look into the newspapers, lest the vile story of my abjectness be in them—I dare not assist at the damning of a new play, lest I see myself on the stage, and, with the horrid mimicry of dramatic extravagance, thus declaring my ill-starred destiny in soliloquy.

[Enter LA COUR.]

Well, Count, what speed? What says her Ladyship?—will she intercede?—shall I get the place? Not a word?

La Cour. I am exceedingly sorry to be obliged to tell you, that she declines to interfere.

Vol. Not interfere! Why does she refuse?

La Cour. Motives of delicacy. She—— [*whispers.*]

Vol. O the worthless woman; just as I stood in need of her patronage, to allow herself to be found out.

La Cour. But I do not yet despair.

Vol. I'm glad of that.

La Cour. There is an instrument, which, skilfully employed, can remove greater obstacles, as well as mountains. You must use it—Lord Waryford is but a man—and all men have their price.

Vol. Must he be bribed? Alas! all I have in the world will go but a little way towards the purchase of a Lord.

La Cour. But there are other things that do as well as gold.

Vol. That's very true; paper does as well; but, Count, the law! the law!

La Cour. You misunderstand me—I do not allude to money. Money, my friend, is the meanest of all things; there is nothing so mean that money is not given away for. Those, therefore, who go to the moral market with that commodity, only show their ignorance of the trade. Flat[illegible] must be your's.

Vol. If flattery will do, I can give his Lordship enough of that.

La Cour. But how? how will you give it?

Vol. 'Faith, you puzzle me, Count. I don't know—Do tell me how.

La Cour. By his valet.

Vol. Well.

La Cour. Secure him—He is accessible to the force of money, and the price of his patronage is not beyond the reach of your means.

Vol. I'll give the fellow twenty pounds for his good word—I will indeed.

La Cour. Twenty guineas may do as a retainer; but more will be wanted in the course of the suit.

Vol. But what will he do for me?

La Cour. I will explain. When he observes his Lordship in negligent good humor, pleased with trifles, and disposed to please, he will softly, as it were from a distance, allude to you and the place. Some other time, while dressing his Lordship's hair, (during which operation the mind is always ductile and complacent,) he will state the business more fully; and thence, from day to day, as opportunity offers, he will continue to ply his dexterous intercession.

Vol. What complicate machinery is necessary to set the promotion of a worthy man a-going!

La Cour. For each time, after breaking the ice, he will expect a fresh fee.

Vol. But how shall I apply to the valet?

La Cour. I can assist you. Have you the money?

Vol. Never was any thing more lucky—I have just received the sum, in payment for two sheets of animadversion, written for a bookseller, to blight the prosperous sale of a work which he had petulantly refused to publish. Repenting of his own folly, he endeavours to damn the author.

La Cour. How is that?—Let me understand you.—This is a sort of Machiavelism quite new to me.

Vol. Indeed! I should have thought that your knowledge of the world would have taught you more than that.

La Cour. No, my friend; we men of the world are accustomed to regard you literary characters as the only persons with whom the principle of virtue is preserved pure. We think that by your simplicity the vestal fire is kept alive in the world.

Vol. Poh, Count, you know better.

La Cour. Upon my honor I do not.

Vol. Is there no quacking among physicians? no tricks among lawyers? no hypocrisy among preachers? And could you believe that the other liberal professors were less like the rest of mankind?

La Cour. But I had imagined, that, as the age of patrons was past, the booksellers had become the protectors of authors, and took no part in their cabals.

Vol. Then you were mistaken—The booksellers have not only their own spites to indulge, but they find it profitable to set authors by the ears.

La Cour. I might have thought so; for mankind delight in quarrels, and the booksellers are in controversy, what the innkeepers are at boxing-matches, and the army contractors in war—they thrive by the vices of individuals and the folly of the public. But, after all, what could the authors do without them?

Vol. They would have to turn their own booksellers.

La Cour. And why not?

Vol. The dignity of their character, Count—the dignity of the literary character!

La Cour. Aye, there it is—authors *will* think themselves superior to the rest of mankind; and the consequence is, that they are universally the most helpless of the human race. But I was not aware that the book-

sellers ever had the presumption to form any opinion of the contents of books.

Vol. No! that's very odd. Lord, Count, how can you, who know so much of life, be so ignorant? Are not the booksellers men in authority, and not as the scribes: and do you think they never talk as such? Why, Sir, there is a fellow that does not know poetry from prose, except by the shape of the letter-press, and the name of the author, yet he will give you, in the twinkling of a few pages, as decisive an opinion on the merits of a work, as if he were actually Apollo. Indeed, were the God [illegible] to offer one of his own compositions to a London bookseller, he would soon have reason to believe that the world has produced more than one Midas.

La Cour. Thank Heaven, my wits never led me to become an author.

Vol. But if I had not been one, I should not have had these notes to give you. Having no practice at the bar, I was obliged to turn critic, and, longing for official employment, I am necessitated to ingratiate myself with the booksellers. But, with your assistance, Count, I may be able to extricate myself from this state of degradation, this pandering to the malice of men in place or power, statesmen and booksellers. There, take the notes.

La Cour. Thank you. By the by, Mr. Volume, do you know his Lordship?

Vol. No; would that I did! my own personal address might then have some effect.

La Cour. I will introduce you. Come with me; we may find him at home about this time. The Countess has a rout to-night—You must be there—I will procure a ticket for you.

Vol. You are indeed a friend—this is indeed politeness. —But urbanity is the indigenous growth of France; in England it is an exotic, and never comes to fruit. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Drawing-room.*

Miss Sylvan, and Miss Kitty with a Parcel.

Miss Kit. I will give my aunt a fright.

Miss Syl. I entreat you not to play this farce any longer: assume your proper character, and disregard her nonsense.

Miss [illegible]t were possible to mend a foolish understanding by talking, all that you have said, Helen, would be mighty proper; but fools can only be taught by folly, and my aunt must feel that she is herself ridiculous, before she will refrain from attempting to make me so.

Miss Syl. At any rate, play no tricks with these things. Honeysuckle is in the hall, and waits to take them home.

Miss Kit. I cannot resist the temptation.

Miss Syl. But what do you intend to do with them?

Miss Kit. [*Whispers.*]

Miss Syl. In the name of modesty, I conjure you not to pretend any thing so indelicate.

Miss Kit. No prudery, cousin; women have the privilege of saying what they please when men are not present —but here she comes,—

[Enter Miss Negative.]

O dear what shall become of us? [*feigning.*]

Miss Neg. How now, Minx, what have you there?

Miss Kit. [*Affects to conceal the bundle.*] Nothing;—you see I have nothing in my hands.

Miss Neg. Move from your place,—move, instantly.

Miss Syl. Do Kate, don't be silly.

Miss Neg. [*Pushes Kitty away, and seizes the bundle.*] What is this? what are these? An infant's frock, a cap,

another and another! For whom are these? What new monster is about to be added to the consumers of the means of subsistence.

Miss Kit. O pity my poor cousin!

Miss Syl. Goodness, Kate! do you allege it of me!

Miss Kit. Indeed, indeed, she could not help it!

Miss Syl. Heavens! are you mad!

Miss Neg. [*To Miss Sylvan.*] Let me look at your shapes.

Miss Kit. O don't be rude; think of her unfortunate condition.

Miss Syl. I can endure this no longer.

Miss Kit. She thought I would not tell.—

Miss Neg. I am thunderstruck!

Miss Syl. She is trifling with us both.

Miss Neg. Approach not me, you incontinent slut: Do you know, Kitty, who was her seducer?

Miss Kit. I will not tell that.

Miss Neg. He ought to be shot!

Miss Kit. But he may marry her yet.

Miss Neg. Marry! He ought rather to be shot, that the world may have room for the addition he is making to the mass of suffering mankind.

Miss Syl. I beseech you, madam—

Miss Neg. Well, madam?

Miss Syl. This is all a trick; these clothes were bought for Honeysuckle, the gardener's wife; the poor creature has had another child.

Miss Neg. Really! I declare the conduct of Honeysuckle and his wife is little better than crim con. How inconsiderate is Nature to allow such things! How durst you, Miss, presume to trifle with me—out of my insulted presence, instantly, I say. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Library.*

LORD WARYFORD [illegible] FARMLY.

Lord W. And what may be the business that has brought you to town?

Farm. Matrimony.

Lord W. You are a bold fellow to venture on a town-bred wife.

Farm. Not quite so bold as that.

Lord W. Who is she?

Farm. Miss Sylvan, the daughter of Sir Thomas.

Lord W. An old attachment; but "the faithful loves reside still in the groves.

Farm. You seem pensive.

Lord W. Not I; I was only thinking that there could not be a fitter moment for communicating some notion of the comforts of matrimony than when a man is on the point of marriage. You have come to me, Farmly, at a moment when I stand in need of a friend,—an honest friend. Have you heard any thing about George Sylvan and Lady Waryford?

Farm. My Lord!

Lord W. His attentions to Angelica affect me little: but according to the maxims of that old rascal, the world, the business has become so public, that I must interfere. Nothing is bad in London, so long as it is unknown; and this affair is now so notorious, that it of course is very bad.

Farm. You astonish me!

Lord W. Come, I pray, put on a negligent face: these looks of grief and surprise are quite obsolete; consider

where you are,—this is one of the most fashionable mansions in London,—This, man, is Waryford-house,—But—

> "Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
> May read strange matters."

I had not been long married when I discovered that Angelica, with all her vigor of understanding, wanted the most essential part of a woman, the heart.

Farm. Sylvan is silly and vain; nor do I think she would be seduced by him.

Lord W. There is no seduction in the case: if there is, he is not the seducer. But I wish you to assist me to discover the truth. To-night all the world with his wife and family are to be here. We have a masquerade, and it may help us to the discovery. You look too much affected. Believe me, I have been long indifferent about the woman, I wish but for a good reason to send her home: my respect for her family will not allow me to do more. The disgrace of a public exposure would break the proud heart of her father; and if she be guilty, what would the prosecution of Sylvan do to me?— I cannot make money by the dishonor of my wife without degrading myself:—but we are interrupted.

[Enter LA COUR and VOLUME.]

La Cour. I have the honor, my Lord, of introducing Mr. Volume to your Lordship.

Lord W. I am indebted to you, Count, for many amusements; I have heard of Mr. Volume's celebrity, and I am glad of having it in my power to make his acquaintance; I have long desired it. Gentlemen, be seated.—

Vol. Your Lordship honors me by such flattering condescension. That a name so obscure as mine should be remembered by your Lordship, is a proof of the excellence of your Lordship's memory.

Lord W. Indeed, Mr. Volume, I do not remember it without some reason:—You have given me cause to remember you.

Vol. O my Lord—

Lord W. I am very sensible of your critical acumen; I have felt the force of your wit.

Vol. You do me infinite honor. If ever your Lordship publishes, which, for the sake of the public, I hope your Lordship will not long delay, I will endeavour to do justice to the merits of the work. If it be anonymous, I hope your Lordship will apprise me.

Lord W. Otherwise, perhaps, without my name, you would not do it justice.

Vol. If we grope in the dark, my Lord, there is some risk of giving the friend a slap in the face, whom we would gladly take by the hand.

Lord W. Very true, and I think you hit Jerry Switch pretty sharply. It was a very facetious article of yours on that unfortunate.

Vol. It is a rule with us, the reviewers, in criticising the works of men of fashion, to indemnify ourselves for the fastidiousness with which they affect to treat us in society—we regard them as poachers in literature.

Lord W. It was so that you treated hapless Jerry: your introductory paragraph was to the point, and pointed enough, as he thought.

Vol. I am astonish'd that your Lordship should recollect such a trifle.

Lord W. It began, I think, thus: "We," the critics, always conscious of their destroying power, like other tyrants, use the social pronoun.—"We," said Mr. Volume "have to lament that our young men of fashion"—

Vol. Pardon me, my Lord, the paragraph ran thus, "We have to lament that among other follies of the age, "while one class of our young men of rank makes degrad-

"ing exhibitions on the coach-box and race-ground, ano-
"ther violates decorum still more offensively in the ca-
"pacity of authors: imitating the poets as clumsily as
"their compeers attempt to practise the dexterity of the
"groom and coachman. The snowy breadth of margin,
"in their publications, indicates the hyperborean sterility
"of their genius, and the rarified phenomenon of the ty-
"pography, is no less demonstrative of the emptiness,
"paucity and parsimony of their ideas."

Farm. Who is Jerry Switch?

Lord W. A very particular friend of your's.

Farm. Indeed!

Vol. Your Lordship then knows the puppy?

Lord W. O very well.

Vol. Who is he?

Lord W. Your most obedient servant to command.

Vol. O Lord!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III

SCENE I. A Room.

MISS SYLVAN and FARMLY.

Miss Syl. I am reluctant to think so ill of my brother —he could not have pressed me to go to her ladyship, had there been any guilty intercourse.

Farm. You do not suspect half her stratagems.

Miss Syl. If Lady Waryford be making business for the lawyers, I should rather suspect the Count than my brother.

Farm. Why?

Miss Syl. I cannot tell, but they appear to know more of each other's thoughts than could be respectively understood if they had not private conferences. Had they been strangers to me, when I saw them last summer in the country, I should have taken them for man and wife.

Farm. You surprise me by so curious an inference. I suspect that a stranger among the Londoners is

somewhat like a person who comes from the fresh air into a crowded room. People who live constantly in the dense moral atmosphere of the metropolis, are little aware how much the best of them are disagreeable to those accustomed to a purer. But will you visit Lady Waryford?

Miss Syl. Do you think I should?

Farm. You are too nice a judge yourself, my dear Helen, of what is proper, for me to offer you any advice.

Miss Syl. Delicacy perhaps should forbid me from going even to her route, but there are cases in which prudence for myself must give way to greater duties. I will go to the masquerade, to observe George and her, when they least expect to be noticed. But let us go into the next room, for I hear my aunt and somebody with her coming this way. [*Exeunt.*

[Enter MISS NEGATIVE and MR. VOLUME.]

Miss Neg. I confess, sir, that these opinions much perplex me. One thing I should be glad to know, and that is, why the world was made at all?

Vol. There you are right;—but since it has been made we should endeavour to know what sort of a thing it is.

Miss Neg. Very true.

Vol. Then—If we are Plutonists, look around; ashes and cinders everywhere demonstrate, that the great globe and all that it inherits was prepared like an earthenware utensil in a furnace. Again, if we become Neptunists, shells in the mountains, and fishes in the stomachs of the hills, are no less conclusive in favor of the aqueous theory. But my hypothesis, at variance with every other, reconciles all these contradictions.

Miss Neg. Superior man!

Vol. You have heard of Hindoo antiquity, and Chinese chronology.

Miss Neg. Certainly I have.

Vol. No doubt also of Noah's ark.

Miss Neg. Yes, long ago, before I became a student of philosophical causes.

Vol. A comet, you know, it has been thought, occasioned the flood.

Miss Neg. Well—

Vol. Comets, vulgarly speaking, are a kind of roving vagabond worlds.

Miss Neg. Libertine planets, Mr. Volume; for they seduce, by their attractions, the others out of their orbits.

Vol. Comets being then worlds, it follows, that the one which destroyed the Antediluvians must have been inhabited.

Miss Neg. I am rather inclined to think that their intense heat must be a salutary check on population; however—

Vol. Now what would you think, if this earth, this identical orb which we inhabit, were no other than the selfsame comet which destroyed the Antediluvians?

Miss Neg. If we are indeed living on a libertine planet, it would account for the disposition of mankind to cause a superabundant population. No such excess could arise in a sedate regular world. But, Mr. Volume, what grounds have you for this opinion?

Vol. The ark, you know, is all that survived of the Antediluvians. What was to have prevented the comet while making the deluge, from whisking off the ark with its tail, and in the course of accidents, thereby placing it upon its own back? If you admit this, you will not refuse to allow that the comet may have become successor to the old world.

Miss Neg. Certainly not. Fate may have given it the reversion of the place.

Vol. Then if the Hindoos and Chinese were the original inhabitants of the comet, their traditions may be true as well as ours.

Miss Neg. But, Mr. Volume, what has become of the comet's tail? O! you are, perhaps, of Lord Monboddo's opinion; and comets certainly may lose their tails as well as men.

Vol. Or a comet may be only a planet in the tadpole state.

Miss Neg. I hope there is no reason to think so; because that would imply that planets breed.

Vol. A thing not at all unlikely, when you consider the number of new ones that have lately come to light.

Miss Neg. Mr. Volume, you do not think so?

Vol. Why not?

Miss Neg. Breeding planets would, indeed, be an evil. Infinite space would become inadequate to contain their enormous progeny.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *An apartment in Waryford-house.*

LORD WARYFORD and LA COUR.

Lord W. Count, one might think by your enthusiasm, that you were actually in love with Miss Sylvan.

La Cour. I would, if I could afford it.

Lord W. You think then that love is a matter of calculation.

La Cour. Does your Lordship not yet think so?

Lord W. How?

La Cour. It is the characteristic of youth to be governed by passion, of manhood to rule passion, and of old age to bewail the death of passion.

Lord W. In the way of love you mean?

La Cour. And yet Miss Sylvan is so charming a creature, that even age might, without affectation,—

Lord W. Calculate how much it might cost to buy her.

La Cour. Her turn of mind resembles your Lordship's.

Lord W. I hope then you think her very sensible?

La Cour. It is to be regretted, that Lady Waryford's sentiments do not accord with your Lordship's.

Lord W. Why?

La Cour. Because your mutual friends would otherwise have a satisfaction which they cannot now enjoy.

Lord W. Explain yourself.

La Cour. They regret that you are not a single man.

Lord W. It is indeed a great pity.

La Cour. Your title and estate, however, may work miracles.

Lord W. Not with Miss Sylvan,—She is engaged.

La Cour. But changes might be wrought.

Lord W. You forget, Count, that her lover is my friend.

La Cour. Friendship, my Lord, is a very comfortable thing. It enables us to eat our dinner cheerfully; to walk about socially; and when we have nothing more interesting to do, it furnishes us with inducements to write letters. But in all the serious business of life, friendship is often a great impediment.

Lord W. I doubt, Count, if you ever found it so. But to what does all this tend?

La Cour. Does not Lady Waryford and Sylvan afford you a vista of freedom?

Lord W. To the point, La Cour; I am interested in what you say.

La Cour. The paragraph in the papers to day—

Lord W. Well?

La Cour. Why may not your Lordship allow sufficient proof to be obtained for a divorce?

Lord W. The idea does honor to your knowledge of my character.

La Cour. Lady Waryford divorced, you might then marry Miss Sylvan.

Lord W. Excellent!

La Cour. And her brother might marry Lady Waryford.

Lord W. Better and better! I will think of this.

La Cour. Bravo, my Lord, shall I endeavour to facilitate the denouement?

Lord W. No sir— [*Exit* LA COUR.
I have often been surprised at the lax principles of this fellow, but the danger of his company never affected me before. How have I been acting, that he has dared to think so meanly of me?—Sparker.

[Enter SPARKER.]

Spark. My Lord.

Lord W. Have you ordered a scarlet domino for the Count?

Spark. I have, my Lord.

Lord W. Order another to be made exactly like it; I wish it for myself.

Spark. I thought your Lordship was to be an Emperor.

Lord W. I am not so ambitious: I will only be a spy. Sparker, provide yourself with a masque and domino, and attend me all the evening.

Spark. What shall I do with the dress for Cato?

Lord W. It was that, was it, that made you think I meant to be an Emperor?

Spark. I thought Cato had been a Roman Emperor.

Lord W. I admire your erudition, Sparker, but let the dress be also ready for me. Let it be understood that I shall appear as Cato;—say nothing of the red domino, on your peril.

Spark. Rely on me, to the shedding of my blood for your Lordship.

Lord W. How now! Sparker, in heroics! —but I forget myself.—Have we any company to-day at dinner?

Spark. Only the Count and Mr. Volume: Mr. Volume is in the library.

Lord W. Is he? then I will take myself to him. [*Exit.*

Spark. He begins to see through the Count. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A Library.*

LORD WARYFORD and VOLUME.

Lord W. The collection is not extensive; I have endeavoured to fill the shelves only with such authors as are supposed to have treated best of their respective subjects. These books on the upper shelf, so conspicuously gilded, contain, with the reviews of your friend Jerry Switch, some biographical notices of the critics. You will find your own character among them: it is in the third volume.

Vol. Your Lordship cannot conceive how deeply I am impressed by the generosity with which you have pardoned my impertinence.

Lord W. I have respited only, not pardoned, Mr. Volume. These biographical memoranda were not collected without design. By way of passing the interval happily until it arrives, read what I have said of you. It will afford you some foretaste of what you may expect. Go up the steps; I will return to you presently.

[*Exit Lord Waryford. Volume ascends the steps.*]

Vol. If I could have foreseen what was to happen, and had but written a flattering review, who knows what his Lordship might have done for me, since notwithstanding the severity of my strictures, he treats me with so much familiarity. He might, perhaps, have promoted me to a seat in parliament:—There my talents obtaining that applause which I am conscious they merit, I might have attained the highest employments in the state. But let me see what he has said of me:—This is the volume: [*reads.*] "A person of some classical reading." Person, is a very cold epithet;—but he was mortified when he wrote this;—he did not know me then. [*reads.*] "but "destitute of knowledge of the world, an egregious syco- "phant, and constantly practising mean tricks to pro- "cure political promotion."—Lies, lies, libels!—[*he tears the book.*] Ha, who comes here?

[Enter LA COUR and the COUNTESS.]

La Cour. Nothing could be more unfortunate.

Lady W. How did it happen?

La Cour. The pawnbroker refused to lend the jewels without a deposit. He says that except for court and six private parties during the winter, you had agreed not to ask them. I then thought of Sylvan, but not having time to call, I sent the old rascal himself, and by a blunder of the servant, he was shown up to the father instead of the son, when the fatal explanation took place.

Lady W. What shall we do?

La Cour. Save yourself if possible; acknowledge to Waryford that you owe money to Sylvan, who, presuming on that claim, has made degrading proposals.

Lady W. I have already used this expedient too often: it will not serve again; every thing to-day conspires against us. For Heaven's sake, La Cour, raise what money you can, and redeem some of my jewels for this evening.

La Cour. 'Pon my honor I cannot command twenty pounds. I was reduced to the necessity of relieving Volume of a few notes, on the pretence of bribing Waryford's valet.

Vol. O Villain, villain!

[*At this moment Lord Waryford enters and the Act ends.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Library.*

LORD WARYFORD and FARMLY.

Farm. But how do you mean to proceed?

Lord W. I will appear as Cato, and afterwards privately change my dress; circumstances from time to time will instruct us in what else may be necessary.

Farm. Is there any way in which the Count can be employed?

Lord W. No—none. I cannot trust him. He would think only of making profit of the business.

Farm. How is it, that with such an opinion, you allow him to be so familiar in your house?

Lord W. Really, Farmly, you are absolutely the ghost of the golden age; I dont mean that of the poets, but of the guineas.—Your ideas, at least, are twenty years out of fashion. Why, man, I can neither tell you how I became acquainted with La Cour, nor in what way he has grown to be one of my friends. He is found in all the well-dressed

mobs of the metropolis, and were you to ask a hundred of those who invite him to their parties, ninety and nine of them could tell you only the same thing. The hemisphere of fashion has many wonderful phenomena: besides the regular planets of nobility, and you fixed stars of country gentlemen, there are evanescent meteors, which but glitter and disappear, and now and then a comet for a whole winter outblazes all the other orbs. But such wonders soon retire; and as no one could tell from whence they came, no one thinks of inquiring into what region they depart.

Farm. To which order of luminaries does the Count belong?

Lord W. You would puzzle a philosopher.—Farmly, he is an emigrant, a sufferer by the delirium of his countrymen.

Farm. Say rather, my Lord, one of those who abandoned their country to the rule and enjoyment of the worthless.

Lord W. Well, well, he stands at least in need of our assistance, and one should forget his faults, in order to remember his misfortunes properly.

Farm. That, Waryford, is liberal—but it is not prudent—

Lord W. Prudent! I was never a worshipper of Prudence, and to say the truth, bad as the world is, I would not, after all my experience, wish to alter my practical religion. The errors of liberality are readily pardoned, but a man to be always prudent, must be sometimes mean; and I would rather be blamed for generosity, than trusted for cunning. But hark—some one is coming.—It is Volume; he has a still more awkward apology to make than for his criticism.

[Enter VOLUME.]

Vol. I know not what to say.

Lord W. Well, Sir.

Vol. Ah me! how stern he is! My Lord, I want words—

Lord W. To say what, Sir?

Vol. If your Lordship will have the condescension to hear what I have to say.

Lord W. Proceed. You said?

Vol. O Lord!

Lord W. Do you address yourself to me?

Vol. If I could express the feelings with which I am affected when I reflect on your Lordship's goodness, considering how much that condescension has led your Lordship into an opinion which—

Lord W. Go on; I am all attention.

Vol. The confusion which I endure at this moment, is infinitely greater than your Lordship's goodness.

Lord W. In what respect?

Vol. It is impossible for me to express, in adequate terms, the wanton attack, which, in an unguarded moment, your Lordship's library drew down on my devoted head. O! I am mad! undone, undone, undone!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Drawing-Room.*

Sir Thomas Sylvan *sings.*

Some talk of Polyanthus,
And of Anemonies,
Of Crocus, and Acanthus,
And some of scented pease;
But of all that grow in gardens,
There's not a flower I know
With such a fal, lal, lal, lal,
As the tulip in full blow.

Sir T. Helen! my dear Helen!

Enter Miss Sylvan.

Miss Syl. Well papa; what's the matter?

Sir T. It's all settled.

Miss Syl. Settled?

Sir T. And the first Monday of next month is the day. The ceremony shall be in our own parish church.

Miss Syl. Dear me—I hope you are not going to marry again—Consider what people will say,—at your age, papa.

Sir T. Hussey, it is yourself.

Miss Syl. No! am I to be married? Pray, who is the happy man? for the last of my declared lovers were discarded two days before we left Sylvan Hall. My first was Sir Towler Dash; he bow-wow'd a great oath, that, if I would have him, he would drive me through the world, four-in-hand, himself. I was hugely tempted, but afraid of my neck; so was off with him.—My Lord Marrowfat came next, and assured me, on his honor, that he would, for my sake, renounce fat cattle, and escort me to every gay resort—at market, or at fair, no doubt; but the

tender was not accepted.—To him succeeded Gabby Verbose, the Member, who made me a most able and argumentative speech, on the utility of marriage in general, and the expediency of my marrying him in particular; but when the question was put, the Noes had it.—Then came Colonel Flourish, with all his blushing honors thick upon—his face: he too was repulsed: and, softly sweet in Lydian measures, came the Honorable Billy Distich, from Oxford, with a sonnet. Alas! poor poet! he pined in thought, and with a green and yellow melancholy, being unable to outlive Delia's scorn at Sylvan Hall —departed that life in a post-chaise.

"These were the prime in order and in might,
"The rest were long to tell."

Sir T. You are a wicked girl. But, to be serious—

Miss Syl. Well then, to be serious, and to speak gravely, which is an active modification of seriousness; for gravity is seriousness, and to be serious is to be grave.

Sir T. Tut, tut! You must receive your cousin Argent as your destined husband.

Miss Syl. But, Sir, I am of opinion, that my cousin, Mr. John Argent, son to the worthy Alderman of that name, is not destined to be my husband.

Sir T. Do reflect. Is he not a handsome young fellow?

Miss Syl. He is—but—

Sir T. But what?

Miss Syl. I don't like him.

Sir T. You don't like him!

Miss Syl. No.

Sir T. Why?

Miss Syl. Because I don't.

Sir T. What is your objection?

Miss Syl. Dear me, Sir—we never have any objection to those we don't like.

Sir T. What is it?

Miss Syl. Well then, Sir—only think of his legs.

Sir T. What's the matter with them?

Miss Syl. On second thoughts, they may do: but then his face, my dear papa—his face.

Sir T. Surely there's nothing extraordinary in his face.

Miss Syl. That's exactly what I think.

Sir T. Pshaw! Helen; I shall grow angry.

Miss Syl. My dear Sir, Argent shall never be my husband.

Sir T. Did you not tell me, last night, that your hand was free?

Miss Syl. I did; but I have since seen Farmly: and were you to ask me the same question again, I could not give you now the same answer. I will certainly not marry without you approbation; and I know you love me too well to think of forcing me to marry without my own. Besides, Sir, Argent and my cousin Kate have been devoted to one another since they were children.

Sir T. Odds devils! I shall grow like my sister, and think the getting of children a plague and evil. Well, well, my dear girl, your declaration perplexes me; but come into my study, where we may not be interrupted, and consult how I am to get extricated from the assurance that I have given to your uncle. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Room.*

LA COUR and VOLUME.

Vol. Count, Count, my dear Count.

La Cour. What now?

Vol. O I am ruined, beyond recovery lost. I am sunk to the bottom of despair.

La Cour. What has happened?

Vol. His Lordship makes a fool of me.

La Cour. Is that all.

Vol. He laughs at me—He must think me mad—There is not a bedlamite that raves as I have raved.

La Cour. Have you committed any new faux-pas?

Vol. When he told me that he was himself Jerry Switch; nor when I heard you tell the Countess that you had cheated me; nor when he found me on the steps, with the torn fragments of my own memoirs in evidence against me; all were nothing to this new misfortune.

La Cour. Be tranquil, and tell me what has happened.

Vol. The very recollection of my confusion is itself confused. I went to offer an apology for tearing the book—blue stars danced before my eyes—I began to speak—he cut me short—I felt as if the pillars of the earth were giving way—I was struck with the perplexity of Babel—I said, I know not what—he laughed, and I am undone.

La Cour. There is nothing to trouble you in all this.

Vol. No!

La Cour. He only laughed, you say.

Vol. Was that nothing?

La Cour. He might have kicked you out of the room.

Vol. Very true; 'faith, I never thought of that. There is some comfort in being only laughed at, when one has run the risk of a kicking.

La Cour. Don't make yourself uneasy; this is no great matter.

Vol. I'm glad you think so. But I shall never be able to look him in the face again.

La Cour. Take no notice of it—forget it—come to the masquerade, as you intended, and meet him there as if no-

thing had occurred. If you can, you may recommend yourself anew to his good graces by some agreeable personation.

Vol. I will, I will. In what character do you think I ought to appear?

La Cour. The one which you can do best.

Vol. Then I'll play Hamlet—

"To be, or not to be? that is the question."

I can do justice to Hamlet, I flatter myself. The elegant melancholy of the philosophical Prince, is quite according to my natural manner.—

"O that this too, too solid flesh would melt,

"Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!"—

What do you think of that?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Dressing-Room.*

LORD and LADY WARYFORD.

Lady W. Alas! my Lord, I have been unworthy of your kindness.

Lord W. I have long thought so.

Lady W. My indiscretions can be no longer concealed.

Lord W. And therefore, I presume, you intend to make me your confidant.

Lady W. I confess that I have been imprudent; but I have not been guilty with Sylvan.

Lord W. With whom then?

Lady W. O spare your reproaches.

Lord W. Is this but a repetition of your old way of

'paying new debts?' What is the extent of your imprudence with Sylvan?

Lady W. No less than fifteen hundred pounds.

Lord W. And he claims remuneration in the way you, no doubt, led him to expect? By my honour, Angelica, you are full five hundred more chaste than I should have given any woman of fashion, like you, credit for.

Lady W. I can plead only infatuation.

Lord W. If I thought you really sensible that you had done wrong—

Lady W. How shall I convince you? O, Augustus, I throw myself on your generosity.

Lord W. You have already done this too often. In one word—things have come to this point, that I will not pay Sylvan.

Lady W. I must pawn my jewels then.

Lord W. If you have resolution to do that, I shall begin to think you reclaimable.

Lady W. But can a woman of my rank submit to such an ignominy?

Lord W. The ignominy lies in the cause, not in the cure.

Lady W. May a Countess, then, pawn her ornaments?

Lord W. Yes, any thing—to redeem her honor.

Lady W. And if I do this, what may I expect from you?

Lord W. That I shall not think you quite so bad as I fear you are.

Lady W. O, Augustus!

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V

SCENE I. *A suit of Apartments in Waryford House. The inner rooms appear filled with company in masque.*

LA COUR *and* LADY WARYFORD.

La Cour. Be on your guard; Waryford has provided a domino similar to Sylvan's—A word to the wise—

Lady W. Seek out Sylvan; get from him an acknowledgment of having received fifteen hundred pounds. Tell Waryford that I have pawned my jewels to raise the money. Away. See, Waryford approaches. Count, Count, when Miss Sylvan enters, bring her to me.

[*Exit Count.*

Enter WARYFORD, *as Cato.*

Lord W. I thought you meant to play "the serpent of old Nile."

Lady W. How could I, without jewels?

Lord W. What! have you taken my advice? Is it possible? Have you really pledged them?

Lady W. Could I do otherwise? I am not dead to shame—I had no other alternative.

Lord W. If this be true, and no trick, you shall not have any reason to repent the temporary privation.

Lady W. Am I so low in your esteem, that you doubt my sincerity?

Lord W. Are you really sincere?

Lady W. That my jewels are pledged, and my debt to Sylvan paid, you shall soon have better proof than my assertion. But this is no place for such conversation.

Lord W. You are either better, Angelica, than I could have hoped, or worse than I have ever thought.

[*Guests enter, and pay their respects to Lady W. who goes off with them.*]

Lord W. Sparker.

Spark. My Lord.

Lord W. Into this recess for a moment.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LA COUR and SYLVAN.

La Cour. There is no other possible way of extricating her Ladyship. Retire, and write the acknowledgment, and return to me directly.

Sylv. My father threatens to inform his Lordship of all.

La Cour. There is no moving in the world without being crossed by honest fools. But no matter; let us only gain time—something may arise. We must prevent your father from meeting Waryford. Be it your business. If we can manage him to-night, her Ladyship will draw him from town to-morrow. But we lose the precious moments while we talk.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter WARYFORD, dressed like the Count.

Lord W. If she has pawned her jewels, there is no other whom she can have employed but the Count. It was a

prophetic inspiration that made me order this dress. Here she comes.

Enter LADY WARYFORD.

Lady W. La Cour, La Cour, have you got Sylvan's acknowledgment?

Lord W. Not yet.

Lady W. O make haste—I am ruined in Waryford's opinion—If you do not get it to-night, I shall go distracted.

[*Exit Lady W.*

Lord W. I am thunderstruck! This vehemence was natural—there was no acting in this—her anxiety was not feigned—her alarm was not artificial. Heavens! can the woman then feel? I may have been to blame myself for many of her errors—Expecting too much, I have given way to an excess of disappointment. Ha! Sylvan.

Enter SYLVAN.

Sylv. Here, here, La Cour—here is the paper. My father is coming this way, and I must meet him.

[*Exit Sylvan.*

Lord W. This is still more extraordinary. A simple acknowledgment for the money—a true acknowledgment—Am I awake? Is this no illusion?

[*Exit Lord W.*

Enter MISS KITTY, dressed as an Officer, and MISS SYLVAN.

Miss Syl. I am almost ashamed of you, Kate. But what do you intend to do?

Miss Kit. Plague my aunt.

Miss Syl. Your sex is too obvious. All the young fellows in the house will be after you.

Miss Kit. I am a match for any of them, or those who come to masquerades must be of another species than we meet at other places. But here comes my aunt, and your father: draw him aside; do, I beseech you.

Enter MISS NEGATIVE and SIR THOMAS.
[*Miss Sylvan takes her father aside.*]

Miss Kit. A pretty little girl—about sixty—I mean sixteen. Hark ye, my dear.

Miss Neg. Fellow?

Miss Kit. How interestingly glum!

Miss Neg. Begone, Sir.

Miss Kit. How could such loveliness dare to venture here alone?

Miss Neg. I have protectors, Sir.

Miss Kit. O that you were under my protection!

Miss Neg. You are an impudent coxcomb; and your protection would be such as vultures give to lambs, covering and devouring.

Miss Kit. I dare swear you have an assignation here with your sweetheart.

Miss Neg. I have no sweethearts—I am above such things.

Miss Kit. Above the age to have them. [*aside*]. Sly rogue!

Miss Neg. Get you gone, puppy!

Miss Kit. Why so coy? These beautiful lips were not made to express scorn. 'Sdeath!

Miss Neg. Unhand me, Sir—O help!

Miss Kit. Softly, my sweet; no one knows us. In this recess is the stillness and twilight so propitious to love.

Sings.

Day fades apace—life and time swiftly flying;
  Forbid this delay, and reluctance so coy;
O gentle fair, cease thy cruel denying,
  While Love waits on tiptoe, impatient for joy

Miss Neg. Sir, you are mistaken; I am no such silly girl as you take me to be—I am, Sir, not a lover of men, but a lover of truth.

Miss Kit. Then you are an angel.

Miss Neg. Ah me! surely the tongues of young men were made to flatter and seduce.

Enter Sir Thomas.

Sir T. Ha! what is this?

Miss Neg. Oh! where shall I hide my blushes?

Miss Kit. In my bosom, love.

Sir T. Sister!

Miss Neg. Brother!

Sir T. Let population florish!

Miss Kit. Dear, sweet Antipopulation!

Miss Neg. What art thou?

Miss Kit. Sweetheart!

Miss Neg. Hà! Kitty, Kitty! betrayed, betrayed! [*Exit.*

Guests pass, Lord Warytord enters as Cato.

Sir T. My Lord, I have been anxiously in search of you.

Lord W. To what cause am I indebted for so much attention, Sir Thomas?

Sir T. I cannot remain privy to affairs, by which your Lordship's honor, and the character of my own family, are affected.

Lord W. I understand you.

Sir T. My son has had very improper doings with your lady.

Lord W. I have heard so, Sir Thomas.

Sir T. Then your Lordship knows of the jewels.

Lord W. Of the pledging?

Sir T. Aye.

Enter Volume, as Hamlet.

Vol. Now for an attitude to captivate his heart—

" Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

" Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,

" Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,

"Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
"Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
"That I will speak to thee."

Lord W. "List, O list!
"I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
"Would harrow up thy soul."

Vol. "Haste me to know it; that I with wings as swift
"As meditation, or the thoughts of Love,
"May sweep to my revenge."

Sir T. Who is this?

Vol. "'Tis I—Hamlet, the Dane."
"You are a fishmonger."

Sir T. It's a damn'd lie.

Vol. "Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't tear thyself?
"Woo't drink up esil? eat a crocodile?
"I'll do't."

Sir T. I always thought, Mr. Volume, (for I know you now,) that you were a fool, but not actually mad before.

Lord W. "That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity,
"And pity 'tis 'tis true."

Vol. "Come, Sir, to draw an end with you,
"Good-night."

[*Exit.*

Lord W. A most incomparable caricature.

[Enter FARMLY and MISS SYLVAN.]

Farmly, a word.

[*Exeunt Farmly and Lord W.*

Sir T. I know not what to make of this Lord—he is so full of levity, that he cannot speak two minutes together seriously. Here was I, on the very point of telling him the affair of the jewels, when in came that ideot Volume, dressed like a frantic play-actor, and, without heeding what I had been saying, they both began to spout nonsense.

Re-enter VOLUME.

Vol. "How now? a rat. Dead for a ducat. Dead."

Miss Syl. " Good my Lord,
" How does your honor for this many a day?"

Vol. " I humbly thank you, well."

Sir T. You are mistaken, Nelly ; he is no Lord—that's he—mad Volume, the author.

Vol. " Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell."

[*He puts up his sword, and exit.*

Sir T. He should not be allowed to go at large.

Miss Syl. He's only acting—he's playing Hamlet.

Sir T. Then he does it confoundedly ill.

Miss Syl. In that consists the humor.

Sir T. Humor is something that enables a man to be laughable only when he pleases; but this fellow's absurdity is natural; he cannot choose but to be ridiculous. Come, let us go into some of the other apartments, where we may find better amusement.

[*Exeunt.*

Guests pass, LA COUR and SYLVAN enter.

La Cour. Where have you been?

Syl. I am in despair. Sir Thomas has met Waryford —I saw them together, and all must be known. Hasten to her Ladyship; she is in the horrors of suspense till she sees you.

[*Exeunt.*

Guests pass, LORD WARYFORD and FARMLY enter.

Farm. Her confession, I think, is a proof of innocence.

Lord W. I should have given it no credit, without other evidence. Her impatient anxiety, when she took me for La Cour, and this acknowledgment for the money, are proofs which I cannot resist.

Farm. You will not now think of a separation?

Lord W. The pledging of the jewels, and so suddenly, is altogether so extraordinary, that I know not what to think.

Farm. It is, to be sure, a most deregatory transaction.

Lord W. How, Farmly? to redeem her honor? But who told you of it?

Farm. Sir Thomas.

Lord W. What does he know of it? Is it already so public?

Farm. I thought he had informed you. It was only for the purpose of telling you that he came here to-night.

Lord W. I am astonished. Lady Waryford told me herself. It was I who advised her to make the sacrifice; but I did not think she had virtue enough to do it.

Farm. It is strange, however, considering the rumors abroad, that she should have thought of borrowing the money from Sylvan, to redeem them.

Lord W. It was to pay Sylvan that she pawned them.

Farm. How! The pawnbroker applied to Sir Thomas, by mistake, instead of Sylvan.

Lord W. I thought La Cour had been her agent. But soft, see where they come. On with your masque. Sparker.

Spark. My Lord.

Lord W. This way.

[*Exeunt Lord W. and Sparker.*

Enter LADY WARYFORD and LA COUR.

Lady W. Had we but the money, we might then fly; but we are entangled, and cannot escape.

La Cour. That cursed blunder of the pawnbroker—and the officious honor of Sir Thomas, have puzzled me. You must endeavour to persuade Waryford to leave town with you, to-morrow—He must be taken out of the way of hearing tales.

Lady W. On what pretext can I ask him?

La Cour. When you produce Sylvan's acknowledgment for the money, he must believe that you have pawned the jewels to pay him. On the pretext of being ashamed of what you have done, you must entreat him to go with

you into the country—His natural generosity will induce him to comply.

Lady W. Will you go with us?

La Cour. That would be imprudent. In the country, we are liable to be discovered. People have so little to do in the country, that they become spies on one another.

Lady W. If we had only money, we might escape to the Continent.

La Cour. Do not talk so wildly. Manage his Lordship a little better, and all may yet go well. Unless you do so, I also must give you up.

Lady W. Cruel La Cour.

La Cour. Come, come, we are not fools—we must not hazard permanent comforts for temporary pleasures. By a judicious use of Sylvan's receipt, you may yet patch up your reputation—with your husband at least.

Lady W. La Cour, you never addressed me with such indifference before.

La Cour. We are in danger, and must not stand on ceremony.

Lady W. Give me the paper.

La Cour. You have got it.

Lady W. Sylvan told me that he had given it to you.

La Cour. I never saw it—I have it not.

Lady W. Good heavens! where is it then?

[Enter Lord Waryford and Farmly, from opposite sides.]

Ha! my Lord!

Lord W. Angelica, your conduct this evening has gratified me beyond all hope. To you, Count, I must ever remain indebted—for the address which you have shown in this business—Consider me, La Cour, henceforth, as truly your friend. How is this? why do you look so amazed? Angelica, what mean these tears? This paper, this receipt from Sylvan, is a bill on me; and, were it

thrice the sum, I would pay it cheerfully, since you have had the dignity to submit to the privation by which it has extricated you from so dishonorable an obligation.

Lady W. Sylvan's receipt in your hand, my Lord?—How did you obtain it?

Lord W. Partly in whim, and partly in design. I put on a domino similar to the Count's, and Sylvan, taking me for La Cour, gave me the paper.

La Cour. All is lost!

[*Exit La Cour.*

Lord W. What is lost?

Lady W. My Lord, my Lord, send me home—Spare me, if you can, a public prosecution.

Lord W. What is this? La Cour—Gone!

Lady W. With Sylvan I am innocent—but with La Cour—

Lord W. O heavens!

[*Sylvan enters, with Sir Thomas and Miss Negative, on the one side, Miss Sylvan and Kitty, followed by Argent, from the other; Volume comes from the inner rooms.*]

Vol. "Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife Baptista. You shall see anon, 'tis a knavish piece of work—But what of that?"

Sir T. Silence! blockhead.

Vol. "Leave thy damnable faces, and begin."

[*observing Lady Waryford weeping.*]

"Get thee to a nunnery."

Lord W. Have done, Mr. Volume.

Vol. Is not this part of the masquerade?

Lord W. Aye, the end of it—the unmasquing. Madam, Mr. Farmly will conduct you to your father's.

[*Exeunt Lady W. and Sir Thomas.*

Miss Neg. O that all husbands would follow his Lordship's example, and send away their wives—and every lady and gentleman resolve, like me, to pass their days in single chastity, for the benefit of their posterity.

THE END.

NOTE ON THE MASQUERADE.

We do not think that the author of this Comedy has done justice to himself, by giving it the title of the Masquerade: as this title must, almost unavoidably, suggest in the minds of his readers, the apprehension, that the plot will be at once very improbable and unnatural, and very common-place: constructed of incidents, which seldom or never occur in real life, but which abound in the productions of the infinite multitude of playwrights of the present day. Those, however, who begin to read this Comedy, under the influence of this apprehension, will be agreeably disappointed; for, in our opinion, the plot is developed with uncommon skill, and so managed as to whet the interest and curiosity to the very last. We must acknowledge, indeed, that the apprehension, to which we have alluded, will gain strength from the circumstance of Lord Waryford's appearing at the Masquerade in the same dress as that worn by La Cour: hence it will be immediately decided, that the infidelity of Lady Waryford is to be detected by means of this most threadbare stratagem— but the author, by the turn which he has given to it, has managed so as to secure a larger share of his reader's approbation than he otherwise would have done, on the same principle, that our satisfaction and pleasure are increased in proportion to the lowness of expectation from which the reality raises us.

The most material and important characters are well sketched; but, in general, they are only sketched: they are evidently the creations of a man, who could, if he had so pleased, have given them all their features in the most marked and distinct manner. In this observation, we allude more particularly to the characters of Lady Wayford and Count La Cour. There are traits in the character of the former, which, though they seldom occur, and then are evanescent, are sufficient to distinguish her from the every-day ladies of fashion, who figure away in our modern comedies. Her overpowering sense of her Lord's generosity to her own unworthiness, as it is depicted in the last scene, as well as her language and conduct in other parts of the play, sufficiently bear us out in our remarks, that the author had imaged to himself, and, if he had so chosen, could have presented to his readers, a much more finished character than he has done in the person of Lady Wayford. The character of Count La Cour is brought more distinctly forth than that of her Ladyship; it is a character, fortunately for this country, and to its honor, not common here; it exhibits that union of cold and calculating villainy with superior talents, and what was dignified or degraded with the name of philosophy, which contributed more than any other cause to the engendering of those calamities, which for twenty years have desolated the greatest part of Europe.

It may, perhaps, be objected to some of the other characters, as well as to some scenes, of the Masquerade, that they bear a greater resemblance to those of Farce, than to those of pure and legitimate Comedy. So far as this observation is applied to the character and behaviour of Volume, we might perhaps admit its truth; but we must contend, that it is unfounded, if applied to the character of Miss Negative, and to her language and conduct; they

exhibit, no doubt, a caricature of the check-population philosophy; but a caricature of a subject which amply deserved it, and executed with a considerable degree of wit and humor.

With respect to the dialogue, it is, in general, neat and sprightly; and what is no common merit, the language and the sentiments are extremely well appropriated to the different personages by whom they are uttered.

On the whole, our opinion of this Play is, that it is the production of an author, who possesses many of the most rare and essential requisites for writing a much better Comedy, than the present degenerate age has witnessed; and one much better than he has now produced: it is the off-hand effort of a writer, who has only to do justice to himself, in order to obtain the approbation of the public.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE matter of No. I. so greatly exceeded the limits prescribed by the price of the publication, that the Editor has been obliged to withhold a Farce intended for the present Number.

The Author's wishes, in the Tragedy of "MULEY SIDAN," shall be carefully attended to.

The Editor begs the Author of "THE FORTUNE-HUNTER" to afford him an opportunity of consulting him. A small alteration is absolutely necessary, before the piece can go to press.

The Opera of "THE PRISONER OF WAR" will be altered as suggested.

"THE SORCERESS" shall have a place in due course.

"THE PROMISE" may probably appear in the next Number: but personal promises, made before the publication was set on foot, have a prior claim over all the pieces subsequently received.

Dramatis Personae

(Duke of Longueville — — — —

Beaufort (Bonnevals friend) —

Cirker (his page — — —

Bonneval (husband to Theodora)

Bertrand (his page — —

Anselm — — — —

Jacques — — —

Gaoler — —

Theodora (Daughter to the Duke) —

Clara (her confidant) — —

THEODORA;

A Tragedy.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Doricourt's House.*

THEODORA and CLARA.

[*Theodora is seated in a mournful attitude.*]

CLA. Ah, wherefore, madam, do I thus behold you!
Thus, ever plung'd in silence and in sorrow?
I left you gay, and lovely as the morn,
When, with your kind permission, I departed
To seek relief for my declining health
Amid our native mountains:—In my absence,
Your darling infant's birth, I hop'd, had added
Maternal transports to your other joys:
But my return makes me a mournful witness,
That happiness no longer is your portion.

Theo. [*rising.*] It has, indeed, taken a long farewell
Of Theodora, for whom now remains

Nothing but sighs and tears and heartfelt anguish
And dost thou ask wherefore these sighs and tears,
Who know'st so well, I rashly have defied
A father's power, and triumph'd o'er his love!--
The daughter of the Duke of Longueville
Is lost in the detested wife of Doricourt!
Alas, 'tis true—in his detested wife.
Oh! I have disappointed the first wish
Of a fond father's heart! yet, could that heart
But image to itself the pangs of mine,
I might regain a portion of his love.—
At least, some gentle drops of sacred pity
Would fall, to hear my melancholy tale!

Cla. Might not a friend in kindness represent—

Theo. O save me from the horrid supposition!
What!—add more shame! more sorrow to the weight
Of the vast load that I have brought upon him!--
No! Let me rather silent sink to rest,
And in the friendly shelter of the grave,
Be no more lov'd, or pity'd, or remember'd!

Cla. Madam, restrain this violence of grief.

Theo. A parent's bitter curse,—a husband's hatred,—
Join'd to disgrace and ruin, who can bear?
Open, thou friendly earth, and in thy bosom
Let me repose, and hide myself in death!

Cla. A father and a husband, both unkind,
Teach dreadful lessons; yet, be comforted;
For who has less deserv'd so hard a fate?

Theo. Ah, cease, my faithful Clara, to persuade me
Have I not merited to be unhappy?
O filial disobedience what can palliate?
You must have often heard a parent's will
Had early destin'd me the wife of Beaufort:—
That hero's son, who once preserv'd his life,
And died to save his friend: which benefit

The Duke, with never-ceasing gratitude,
Has labor'd to repay; and 'twas with joy
His daughter's hand and fortune, he decreed,
Should to the son, reward the father's action.
This son, too, was deserving every bounty
That gracious heaven bestows on happy mortals:
And though from childhood I had not beheld him,
Yet his high-sounding praise had reach'd my ears.
It spoke him noble-minded, generous, brave:
Report was never weary in his praise;
And my delighted father was its echo.—
But deaf to ev'ry voice we ought to heed,
I only listen'd to the voice of Doricourt.
The dreadful moment of infatuation
Arriv'd and doom'd me to this depth of ruin!
Alas! I own my punishment is just:
But ought it, Doricourt, to come from thee!

Cla. Madam, have better thoughts.

Theo. Good, friendly creature!
Whose patient duty merits more reward,
Than thy poor mistress ever can bestow;
Methinks in talking o'er my woes to thee,
I feel my mind reliev'd—and Comfort come.
Surely my sufferings will atone my faults;—
For thus to lose a tender parent's love,
To live in poverty with those that hate us.—
But let me bear my injuries with patience!
The scene must soon be clos'd, and could I hope
His grandsire's blessing for my darling child,
A mother's anxious heart would rest in peace.

Cla. There is no question but his innocence
Must melt your father's heart.

Theo. O that it may!
It is his sole dependence; for his father,
(From thee 'tis needless to conceal the truth)

By a long series of imprudent conduct,
Has brought us all to poverty!—
But would to heaven—
That poverty was all I had to fear;
For labor would gain bread, and bread so earn'd,
Were a sweet morsel when compar'd to those
Rich, costly viands that my bitter griefs
Have so long poison'd! Would they were indeed
The strongest poisons!—ah!—be firm, my soul;
Nor dare a moment listen to the tempter.
'Tis worse than death, his proffer'd liberty,
And from the everlasting book of life
Would blot thy name without a hope of pardon.
O hasten, Clara; bring me my sweet infant:
That smiling cherub is as yet unconscious
Of his surrounding evils; and to see him,
Methinks, gives ease to my perturbed spirit.

[*Exit Clara.*

There is a secret lodg'd within this bosom,
That with deep horror tinges every thought.
O Doricourt! O Beaufort! names ill join'd!
Names equally destructive to my peace!
Thou fiend-like jealousy, e'en noble minds
Thou sometimes hast, unpitying, o'erthrown.
But when thou art an inmate of that breast,
Where radiant virtue never deigns to enter,
All is confusion, darkness, and despair!
Dreadful the tyranny then exercis'd
O'er those whom fate has plac'd within their power.

[Enter DORICOURT.]

Dor. What, madam, still those melancholy looks?
'Tis long since I have either heard or seen
Aught but this face of woe;—Is such the greeting
I must expect henceforward when I meet you?

Theo. I would conceal my sorrow if I could.

Dor. Madam, madam, I am not deceiv'd:—
'Tis not with mournful looks,—it is with smiles
You welcome those you love.

Theo. [*aside*] O heavens!—

Dor. What then, 'tis deem'd unworthy of regard,
Remonstrance from a husband? O thou false one!

Theo. False! Doricourt, O 'tis impossible
Thy heart can credit what thy tongue has utter'd.
The loss of thy affections I submit to;
My want of merit may have caus'd that evil:
A parent's indignation I have borne,
And poverty's approach appals me not.
But midst this mass of evils, one idea
Is left for consolation,—a broad shield,
To interpose between me and despair;
And that is innocence, a conscience clear
Of all that may be deemed offence to thee.
Yet here mistake me not; O I am far
From boasting of myself, as free from error;
The sin of disobedience rests upon me.
The first great law of heaven I have broken,
And 'tis but just I suffer for my guilt!
Yet do not thou reproach me!

Dor. Madam, a shorter speech had better pleas'd me,
Who came not here to listen to your boastings,
For I have business calls me from my home.
Ah! does the news displease you?

Theo. You go not hence to-day?

Dor. And wherefore not?

Theo. Nay, as you please; but surely you remember
You have appointed Beaufort here to-day.
You have, I trust, sent to forbid his coming.

Dor. Are you afraid that he should come?—I am not
When wives are bless'd with virtue, where's the danger?

Theo. Unhappy Doricourt! Ah, wherefore seek

Thus to torment yourself with causeless doubts?
Beaufort comes hither only as your friend:
I must insist his coming be forbidden.

Dor. Insist! and then you'll boast yourself submissive.
But I will force you to perform your duty;
Which ever is, t'obey a husband's orders.
This moment write to Beaufort! I command it!
No words; remonstrances are all in vain.

Theo. Yet hear me, Doricourt—

Dor. Have I not said
Remonstrance is in vain?—besides, beware;
Even reluctance may betray suspicion;
Why should you fear to see your husband's friend?
Write instantly what I shall dictate to you,
Or dread the consequence of disobedience.
Sit down—begin—I hate such affectation.
Write thus: [*Theodora appears to comply with great unwillingness. Doricourt goes on.*]
"My husband's accidental absence need not
"Delay your visit, he will soon return:
"I shall expect you at the time appointed."
Now sign your name, "yours, Theodora."
[*She would speak, but he prevents her.*]
Write it, I say,—there now—give me the paper.
I charge myself with sending to my friend
This billet from my wife; there is no fear
He will refuse so kind an invitation.

Theo. 'Tis of your sending, Doricourt.

Dor. Well, let it pass so,
That need not be debated; I have tried
To give you consolation for my absence;
Am I not complaisant?

Theo. O cruel man!
Let me implore you to complete your purpose:
Far rather doom me now to instant death!

For thus to torture me with vile suspicions,
Is worse than death! Behold, I stand prepar'd—
Deep in this faithful bosom plunge your sword,
And I will bless the kind releasing stroke;
But go not hence to-day—or take me with you!
Thus kneeling, I implore—

Dor. You are deceiv'd.
To be suspicious suits the guilty mind,
Unless you know that I have cause for doubting,
Why should you think I doubt your innocence?
Beaufort and Theodora both are—angels!
And Doricourt—a fiend!—this is the picture
Suits your romantic fancy to contemplate.
But are you sure you color after nature?
I see not the resemblance.—Some time hence
My character will better be explain'd:
For yours—you take no pains that it may please me.
Could I imagine penitence had caus'd
This wond'rous grief, it might excite compassion:—
Hence! to your chamber! I desire your absence.

[*Exit Theodora.*

Now for my plot, to put it to the proof.
If fair Lavinia rightly has inform'd me,
Who could not bear, she said, to see with patience
Her Doricourt the wretched dupe of Beaufort,
And by a wife dishonor'd, and despis'd!
Lavinia's love is ever anxious, faithful,
Ardent to please the object of her wishes:
I'll see her ere the meeting I have plann'd
Has taken place, receive her last instructions,
Then, darting on my unsuspicious prey,
Gain vengeance ample as my soul can wish.
Now, thou proud offspring of the man I hate,
Thy fate suspended hangs—the balance trembles!
And if unwarn'd by thy good genius, Beaufort,

Th' invited interview thou dost not shun,
Thou rushest on inevitable ruin!
Then will the world decide on Theodora!
Doom her to shame!—bless me again with freedom!
To her proud father gladly I'll resign her,
And henceforth only live for my Lavinia!

[*Exit Doricourt.*

SCENE II. *Beaufort's House.*

Enter BEAUFORT and CARLOS

Beau. I tell thee, Carlos, I will not be rul'd!
Where is the danger? if thy coward soul
Shivers with fear at but imagin'd ills,
And on the verdant plain, where hope and joy
Invite our footsteps to delicious wanderings,
If then thou start and warn me to beware,
Because thou fanciest precipices hid,—
Shall I, who feel no fear, retreat from pleasure?

Car. Let me persuade you, sir, to pause a moment:
My trembling age, no doubt, is prone to fears,
But seldom felt by inexperienc'd youth:
Yet, pardon, sir, the fears affection raises:
'Tis ever watchful, and alarm'd by trifles.
I have of late beheld so great a change
In Doricourt, it has awaken'd caution;
For 'tis now nois'd abroad that he has squander'd
All his large fortune, and with hasty strides,
Ruin approaches, and must overwhelm him.

Beau. O that the ruin fell on him alone!

But Theodora and her child must share it!
I see it comes—pale poverty has flung
Her dart at Doricourt; and little space
Appears between him and the yawning gulph!
I have assisted him beyond what thou
Wouldst deem to lie within the bounds of prudence
And had I given all the wealth of worlds
To succour Theodora—it were nothing!
But loss of wealth alone cannot have caus'd
The change I witness in that charming woman.
Her faded form—the languor of her eyes,
Gleaming with frequent tears—the heart-heav'd sigh—
Speak her unhappy! and shall I remain
A calm spectator of her wrongs and sorrows?
Nor try to snatch an angel from destruction?

Car. Ah! rather fear to heighten her distress:
Is it from Beaufort, once her promis'd bridegroom,
That (wretched though she be) the wife of Doricourt
Should dare accept of succour?—'tis her father
Alone can now avert th' impending storm.
Will he remain unmov'd by such distress!
It cannot be—he is her father still.

Beau. How much thou art deceiv'd! he bears, indeed,
The name of father, but within his heart
Parental fondness has been long extinguish'd.
By rage and disappointment quite subdu'd.
O! I can ne'er forget that dreadful moment
When we first heard the fate of Theodora!
Thou may'st remember, how with swiftest speed,
Urg'd on by love and hope, I sought the castle.
The sun's first rays reveal'd the glittering turrets,
Which proudly rose amid surrounding woods.
How did my heart then bless its gracious beams,
And hail them as my guide to happiness!

We pass'd the outward gate; around us throng'd
Each visage horror-struck, and pale from fear,
The numerous domestics; no one spoke
Till Anselm, breaking through the crowd, approach
me:—
And whilst his tears fast flow'd, reveal'd the news
Of Theodora's flight with Doricourt!

Car. Alas! my master,—wherefore thus renew
Scenes of past sorrow, which the voice of prudence
Dictates to bury in eternal silence?

Beau. Indulge me, Carlos, in the mournful theme;
I will not paint to thee my misery,
But can I ever drive from my remembrance
The dreadful scene of horror and despair,
When from these lips the wretched Duke first learnt
That all he lov'd and all my hopes were lost!
As yet he had not heard it; none had dar'd
To be the messenger of such dire tidings.
With Anselm, therefore, I prepar'd to seek him;
And long we trac'd his steps, 'midst echoing groves,
Where through her favorite walks he sought his child,
And loudly call'd on Theodora's name!
When he beheld us first, his loud complaint
Gave way to speechless anguish, and to earth
He sunk exhausted, while deep groans burst forth
Prophetic of the tale I had to tell!
But when the fatal truth was fully known,—
When I join'd Theodora's name to Doricourt's,
What ecstacy of rage transfix'd his soul!
Ah! rather far (exclaim'd the frantic father)
Say she is dead, than wife to Doricourt!
Recal thy words! confirm my former fears!
Say but she lives not, and I'll bless thy tidings!
Then, wild with fury, call'd on heaven to pour

Its direst curses on his daughter's head,
Vowing eternal enmity and scorn
To her, and to her husband.
Vainly I tried to check his raging passion;
But had as vainly hop'd to calm the ocean,
When the tempestuous and wintry winds
Howl o'er its foaming surface! All I gain'd
Was pardon to myself, for having pleaded
Poor Theodora's cause, nor from that day
Has he e'er breath'd her name; yet sometimes hints
His hopes that he may live to be reveng'd!
Canst thou think, therefore, he will pity her?
No! he will dwell with transport on her griefs,
And farther still, to rend my heart, require
Me to participate his horrid raptures!
O Theodora! my once destin'd bride!
Beaufort will perish with thee, or preserve thee!

Car. Alas! what can you do?

Beau. I know not yet,
But to refuse her gentle invitation
Is not within my power; and thou would'st again,
With reason scorn, such cold unmanly prudence.
Dost thou think Beaufort learnt no better lesson
From the protection of the noble Longueville
Than to forsake his daughter in distress!
To cheer the drooping heart, on the pale visage,
With sorrow's gloom o'ercast, to raise the smile
Long banish'd thence, to view the late dull eye
Sparkling with gratitude and new-born hope:
These are my pleasures, such the joys I seek!
But whilst I talk, perhaps my Theodora
Waits in suspense, and doubts the tardy Beaufort.
O let me fly to chase away those doubts!

Something, and quickly too, must be attempted,
Worthy of her desert and of my love!
What! does the name of love affright thee, Carlos!
Yet, fear it not, old man, for 'tis so pure,
Angels may view, and envy the sensation!

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Doricourt's House.*

THEODORA and CLARA.

Theo. Clara! my fluttering heart, dismay'd, and fill'd
With doubts and fears, admits not consolation!
Terrors, till now unknown, have seiz'd my spirits!

Cla. Madam, compose yourself; the hour approaches
When Beaufort will be here: spare his surprise
To see you thus, for it may cause conjecture.

Theo. Ah what can he conjecture but the truth?
He knows I am unhappy. Canst thou think,
Beaufort, a constant inmate of this house,
Has not oft witness'd Theodora's wrongs?
The gloomy spirit of the cruel Doricourt
Sits ever on his brow to greet his wife;
And when by duty urg'd I try to please,
Howe'er th' attempt is made, 'tis sure to fail.
Our infant too, sole pledge of our past loves,

He spurns from him, and calls it little beggar!
Bids it be gone, and of its grandsire ask,
The proud Duke Longueville, to give it bread.
Unaw'd by Beaufort's presence, he has rav'd
Against my father, and has vow'd revenge.
O when I hear that sacred name revil'd,
My soul, indignant, rushes to my lips:
But conscience checks the yet unspoken words;
For what have I to do with rash replies,
Who mark'd out my own fate—who ruin chose?

Cla. May Heaven, all just, avenge your woeful wrongs
Upon the heads of that detested crew
Who lure your husband to the paths of vice!
And wither'd be her charms for whom you lose
The love that once was yours!

Theo. Mistaken Clara!
Pray rather that my husband's heart be alter'd.
'Tis not Lavinia's charms I've cause to dread;
It is his changeful spirit, from his home,
From peace and virtue that bewilders him.
Lavinia's loss some other would supply;
I gather thence no hope. Virtue has left
His bosom dark and void, and vice usurps
Dominion o'er that breast where virtue dwells not.
Pray with me, Clara, that no farther evils
Than those already known, are suffer'd from him.
In time he may repent—in time be wise—
And find, though late, how fruitless the pursuit
Of happiness, by aught but lawful means.

Cla. Alas! that one so wise, so fair, so young,
Should waste in vain regrets each passing hour!

Theo. O Clara! little wisdom have I shown.
But, since the time when Beaufort is expected
Draws on apace, tell me if thou hast rais'd
That sum of money on my wedding jewels?

Worn once in guilty joy—because the price
Was filial disobedience. Well I know
We are, and largely too, in debt to Beaufort,
Which much my mind revolts at; and this sum
Will serve a little to discharge the debt.

Cla. These, Madam, are the notes—

Theo. Deceitful Clara!
Declare to me by whom these notes were given,
Or dread to meet my bitterest indignation.

Cla. Dear Madam, hear me—

Theo. Vainly would you hide
What my good genius has discovered to me.
These notes are Beaufort's! Where are then the jewels?

Cla. Madam, believe I meant not to offend you.
Mere chance conducted all. The jeweller
Was looking at the diamonds, to determine
What money he should give, when Beaufort enter'd.
Starting as he perceiv'd them, he demanded
If I had brought them, and to what intent;
Which, ere I could prevent, the man declar'd.
O had you then beheld the noble youth!
Raising his eyes to Heaven, he smote his breast,
"And is it come to this, my Theodora?"
He softly spoke; then told me you had order'd
The diamonds should be given to him; and asking
What was their worth, paid me, before the man,
The full amount, and left me instantly.

Theo. O there is more in this than meets my ear!
But, Clara, leave me; let me think a moment
How, in this intricate and dangerous labyrinth,
I may conduct myself.

Cla. Madam, be assur'd
I would not have deceiv'd you. Your surprise
At sight of Beaufort's hand, and exclamation,
Cut short my speech, or you had known it all.

Theo. It is enough, my Clara; and now leave me.
[*Exit Clara.*

A moment's recollection, O my soul!
Ere thou art call'd to action. Generous Beaufort!
And dost thou pity Theodora's sorrows?
And would'st thou, if kind fate allow'd, relieve them?
But no: stern fate frowns awful, and forbids it;
The wife of Doricourt devoted falls,
Nor dares attempt to seek a friendly shelter.
Methinks 'tis hard I should be thus forlorn!
No friend to screen me from approaching ruin,
But one, whose stretch'd-out arm I dare not grasp,
Not e'en to save an infant! O 'tis hard
A mother's breast must thus be turn'd to marble!
Yet, when the frame is moulder'd into dust,
Then, Beaufort, thou may'st be the orphan's friend,
Nor fear a censuring world. O Doricourt!
Thy child must by another hand be fed!
That child which, by its birth made dearer to you,
You fondly swore, its then exulting mother,
Who bless'd the babe for the lov'd father's sake.
Yes, once I lov'd him! Be thou witness, Heaven,
And all ye passing hours, stamp'd with his image,
Witness how much I lov'd him! Like the rose,
Its opening sweets disclosing to the morn,
My love commenc'd; but when that blooming flower
Becomes the prey of some devouring insect,
Or, blighted by some cold and noxious blast,
Falls withering to the ground ere reach'd its prime,
So grief, than canker-worm or noxious blast
Still more destructive, triumphs o'er my frame,
Has conquer'd love, and soon must conquer life!

Enter BEAUFORT.

Beau. My Theodora! Gracious heavens! in tears!
Wherefore this sorrow? Answer, I conjure thee!

Theo. 'Twas but a momentary burst of anguish.

Beau. I met your husband as I enter'd hither;
Smiling, he spoke; excus'd his being absent;
Would soon return, and (for I question'd him)
Said, Theodora and her child were well.

Theo. And could he look so happy? could he smile,
When he had left his wretched wife a prey
To heart-corroding anguish?

Beau. O my sister!
By that soft name, so cherish'd once by Beaufort,
When, during childhood, the fond appellation
Dwelt ever on my lips; disclose to me
What can have caus'd such anguish.

Theo. It is impossible.

Beau. Recall to mind the dear delightful days
Of playful infancy, when every sport
Was shared by each, each thought and wish the same.
Your kind and honor'd father I call'd mine;
And even then, how did my little heart
Swell with exulting joy, when Theodora
Call'd Beaufort by the tender name of brother.

Theo. Ah Beaufort! those were happy days indeed!

Beau. Happy! How cold that word; 'twas bliss supreme;
And every fond and trifling recollection
Of those dear times, more warms my soul to rapture
Than all that beauty, pomp and power now give.

Theo. O memory! thou fatal foe to peace!
Who, when the mind would slumber o'er its woes,
Like the harsh-sounding drum to the tir'd soldier,
Bids him, with wounds as yet unclos'd, prepare
For further dangerous and doubtful combat!
Cease then reviving to my tortur'd mind
Scenes which, in circles of returning pleasures,
Made us forget the rapid flight of time;
For all is vanish'd like a dream, and both

Are different beings from what once they were!
Thou art the friend of Doricourt, and I
His wife. Therefore accept again
These notes, too-gen'rous Beaufort, and restore me
What you receiv'd from Clara.

Beau. Heaven! and didst thou
Deem me so selfish as to doubt a moment
I meant not to restore them? For that purpose,
And that alone, I rescued them from Clara.
Though all the splendor of Golconda's mines
Would fail to render thee more fair, more noble,
In Beaufort's eyes; yet has the world its claims,
Who think thee injur'd, if debarr'd such ornaments,
Thy right by birth and beauty, and once thine.

Theo. Beaufort, those days are past, ne'er to return,
When with some pleasure I could deck this form,
To render it more pleasing in the eyes
Of partial fondness. Thence rose all the value
My mind could ever place on outward splendor.
But long-lost love no diamonds can restore;
And in whose eyes would splendor now become me?
The world talk loudly of our ruin'd fortunes.
Thou art not ignorant of our deep distress;
We are indebted to thee much too largely,
I know we are, and meant to gain thee payment,
But thou hast marr'd my project.

Beau. Noble creature!
Friend of my soul, which in wild tumult rises,
Nor can the magic of thy voice control it.
Talk not to me of payment, who but render
Back to the daughter what I owe her father,
Nor can I ere discharge the mighty debt.

Theo. Thou art ingenious, Beaufort, to deceive;
But Theodora's pride forbids deceit.
'Tis gratitude that prompts my father's kindness;

He was the first indebted, and 'twas thine
Gave thee a right to all that mine can give.
For what are riches when compar'd to life—
To life, when sanctified by noble deeds?
And, shining midst the brightest of our heroes,
Thy father nobly died to save his friend.
Talk then no more of what thou owest me;
But if indeed thou would'st I should accept
Assistance at thy hands, I mean to claim it.

Beau. Good heavens! and canst thou make it then a question?
Speak; for I will not stop thee by professions.
Could'st thou but read my soul—

Theo. I think I can.
And art thou sure thou hast no cause to shrink
From my observing, from my rigid eye,
Which misery has waken'd to suspicion?

Beau. To that all-seeing Power I now appeal
Who justly judges all our thoughts and actions!
If I have aught within this beating bosom
He not approves, or pities, may I be
An outcast both from Heaven and Theodora!
Why dost thou eye me with that piercing aspect?
Canst thou a moment doubt thy brother's love?

Theo. I will not doubt it; but it must be tried.
And, O believe me, Beaufort, my poor heart
Shrinks from the idea of what thine will suffer
To learn thy sister's full extent of woe.

Beau. Is there then more than Beaufort has imagin'd?

Theo. Yes; there is somewhat which thy generous spirit
Could never have suggested; a deep horror,
That with the darkest gloom o'ercasts my fate.

Beau. Speak, I conjure thee; ease my tortur'd soul.

Theo. Heart-rending task! My trembling voice refuses
To taint the air with the detested sounds.

O for a moment's courage! Hark! what noise?
Heardst thou approaching footsteps?

Beau. From whence
Arises all this fearful perturbation?
I heard not any noise. Compose thy spirits,
And trust thy sorrows to this faithful bosom.

Theo. Then hear me, Beaufort. By thy hopes of heaven,
By the respect thou bear'st thy father's memory,
By all the pity thou hast felt for mine,
And all thy vows of friendship to thy sister,
I do conjure thee, never see her more!

Beau. Good heavens! and wherefore not?

Theo. It is my wish.

Beau. But can it be thy wish I should be wretched?
Say then what crime can Beaufort have committed,
Thus to be driven from thee?
Speak, or I'm rooted here.

Theo. And must I then,
Howe'er unwilling, tell thee all the truth?
Prepare thy mind to combat with its horrors.
Suspicion, with her pale and sickly mien,
Perverting good to evil in all bosoms,
Has enter'd Doricourt's! She triumphs there,
E'en o'er thy virtues triumphs, and in whispers
(Breath'd louder as they greedily are listen'd to)
Dares to join infamy with Beaufort's name
And Theodora's! Well may rage indignant
Shake thy whole frame; and that I have the power
To tell the horrid tale is wonderful.
Yet, since thou now hast heard it, O beware
How thou to desperate actions art impell'd!
Thy sister's life and fame are both at stake.
Wilt thou not lend thy generous aid to save her
From threaten'd ruin—though the means be painful?

Beau. Yes; I will shelter thee from every ill;
I will conduct thy doubting, trembling steps
Where best thou may'st find comfort—to a father.
Nay, start not at his name—I have the power
To sooth his rugged soul—He will forgive thee,
I know he will, if led to him by Beaufort,
And he will bless me for thus saving thee
From misery and Doricourt.
Nor thither will thy husband dare pursue thee.
Or should he dare, from this avenging arm
He shall receive the punishment he merits.

Theo. Did I not tell thee, Beaufort, to beware
How thou let passion tempt thy noble mind?
What! shall our actions justify suspicion?
The cruel Doricourt is still my husband.
Vows witness'd by my God I dare not break.
I here abide my fate, whate'er it be!
Yet listen to me calmly for a moment,
Let me convince thy reason, though 'tis blinded
By motives which (I own) invite to vengeance;
But, at my prayer, forgive my wretched husband!
For wretched are the guilty! Leave revenge
To ever-waking conscience; 'tis forgiveness
Alone yields noble triumph—be it thine.
Here let us take an everlasting leave.
Repair thee to my aged, sorrowing father,
Smooth the rough path of his declining years,
And, if thou hast the power, O intercede
In favor of my child. Wilt thou not, Beaufort?
Why dost thou thus avert from me thy looks?
Canst thou refuse thy Theodora's prayer?
Wilt thou increase thy sister's weight of woe?

Beau. No; thou must ever conquer; 'tis decided—
We meet no more, since thou wilt have it so.
Heaven has rewards in store for suffering innocence.

Yes; let not hope be banished from thy bosom,
For even Doricourt may yet be just;
He will awake from error, and restore thee
A husband worthy of thy many virtues.
And now farewell!—alas! farewell for ever!

At that moment enter DORICOURT *with his sword drawn.*

Dor. Perfidious traitor! base, dissembling woman!
Revenge is mine—I seek it in thy heart.

[*Stabs Beaufort, who falls.*

Beau. Mistaken man! thy wife is innocent.
I pardon thee my death. [*Faints.*

Theo. O wretched Doricourt, what hast thou done!
Help! help! O hasten—try all means to save him.

Dor. The blow was driven home. I think it pierc'd
Thy image in his heart. All help is vain—
I leave you to your sorrows; when they cease,
I may perhaps return.

[*Exit.*

Theo. Is Beaufort murder'd
And Theodora spar'd? Ah! wherefore spar'd?
Perhaps he yet has life—O no! his mounting spirit
Seeks its own heaven, and gains its bright reward.
O linger yet awhile, and mine will join thee.
I faint—I die—Beaufort, I follow thee.

[*Faints.*

Enter CLARA, CARLOS, *and other Servants sent by* DORICOURT.

Cla. O horror! horror! what a sight is this.
Help me to raise her.

[*They place her in a chair.*

Car. Alas! my master!
Had but thy gallant spirit deign'd to listen
To what the voice of prudence whisper'd thee,
Thou hadst not thus lain low. Help me, my friends,
To bear the body hence, and soon revenge

Shall overtake the deed. I was prepar'd
To have defended him; but fate, so speedy,
Mock'd my precautions, and leaves naught but vengeance.

[*Exit Carlos with the body.*

Theo. O heavens! where am I?

Cla. Help! she yet lives, help!

Theo. Thou dost elude my grasp, image of death!
The hateful light again invades my eyes,
And memory wakens every sense of pain.
Ah, Clara, wherefore this officious aid?
Leave me to die!

[*After a pause, and looking round her, she exclaims*]

Surely 'twas all a dream,
Some horrid fancy of the troubled mind,
And Beaufort lives. My husband is no murderer!
Let us go seek him, Clara. Ah! what's this?
'Tis blood—'tis Beaufort's blood! No doubtful vision,
But dreadful confirmation. Clara, look—
My husband's sword has shed my brother's blood!—
I am a murderer's wife!

[*She leans on Clara.*

Cla. Alas! again she faints.
Assist me to convey her to her chamber.

A great noise.

Enter ANSELM and BERTRAND, Officers of Justice, CARLOS and DORICOURT.

Car. Perform your orders—Ministers of Justice,
Seize on the murderer. Behold where blood,
Unjustly shed, cries out aloud for vengeance.

Dor. Fate, thou hast caught me. Slaves, stand off a moment;
You have me in your toils. Yes, that way lies
Some glimmering of hope.—It must be tried.—
Now lead me to my dungeon, though it prove

Dreary and dark as ever fearful fancy
Pourtray'd to trembling guilt, I fear it not.
My wrongs are well aveng'd—that thought will lighten
A prison's gloom, and smooth the pangs of death.

[*Exit Doricourt, guarded.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Doricourt's House.*

Enter Clara and Anselm.

Cla. Alas! what scenes of complicated woes
Have these sad eyes beheld!

Ans. Whence art thou come?

Cla. Commanded by my mistress, I had been
To seek our master in the gloomy prison;
And, as returning, near the city gates,
I met the long procession of a funeral,
I heard on every side the name of Beaufort
Breath'd forth in piteous accents: then, enrag'd,
The crowd cried out for vengeance upon Doricourt,
The murderer of his friend, the base assassin!
I made slow way through the impeding throng;
When suddenly was heard a voice from far
In piercing sounds exclaim, "O stay your haste,
And take another mourner to your train."

The multitude respectfully gave way,
When there appear'd to my astonish'd eyes
The Duke of Longueville.
His hoary head, blanch'd by the hand of Time,
His noble mien, commanding veneration,
Hush'd the spectators to attentive silence,
Whilst he, with frantic grief, bewail'd the dead.
" Son of my age," he cried, " unhappy youth!
" So lov'd, so honor'd, and so early lost;
" O from those skies, where now enthron'd in bliss
" Thy spirit dwells, look down, look down to earth,
" And pardon me, thy foul unnatural murder.
" Alike destructive to the sire and son
" Have been my race accurs'd. O generous spirits,
" Can ye pardon them?"
How felt each bosom for his weight of sorrow!
I fear'd to meet his eyes, and hasten'd homeward,
But heard behind me long repeated tumults.
The multitude was rais'd to maddening fury;
And now they guard in crowds the prison doors,
Lest Doricourt attempt to fly from justice.
Anselm, be thou at hand. Perhaps the Duke
May seek his daughter; and his rage I dread.

Enter THEODORA.

Theo. Did I not entering, or my ears deceiv'd me,
Hear thee say something of the Duke, good Clara?

Cla. Madam——*(hesitating.)*

Theo. Nay, do not hesitate to tell me all;
All evil is indifferent to me now.
Rage on, tempestuous fate! like some tall rock
That rears its head amidst the foaming main,
Methinks I stand, and vainly howls the storm,
The thunders roar, the lightnings dart in vain,
Nor can the mounting waves which cope with heaven
Destroy what mocks their fury; 'tis alone

That sudden shock to nature, pent up fires
Cause in their bursting forth, that can produce
Destruction instant, total and prodigious!
Thus 'tis that last great shock to human nature,
The stroke of death alone can conquer me.
Then, Clara, fearless tell me all thou know'st,
What thou canst say, will but encrease the storm,
Thou hast no power to end it.

Cla. Madam, I saw the Duke.

Theo. Ye heavenly powers!
Hast thou then seen him, Clara? seen my father?
What brought him hither? didst thou see him near?
Saw'st thou the furrows in his reverend cheeks,
Caus'd by the tears for Theodora's loss?
Did he behold thee? did he speak to thee?
Hast thou not brought me some few words of comfort?

Cla. Madam, I fear'd to meet his looks, and therefore
Came quickly home to give you timely notice;
Methinks I hear—

Theo. Ah whither shall I fly?
It is his well-known voice, and my struck heart
Shrinks withering from the sound! support me, Clara.

Enter the DUKE.

Vengeance, my daughter—yes, I call thee daughter!
Again these lips pronounce the once-lov'd name,
These arms again shall press thee to my bosom,
So thou but minister to my revenge!

Theo. My father!
And is it given me once more to behold
Thy face, my father? do I hear thy voice?
And, when I kneel thus humbly at thy feet,
Wilt thou not spurn me from thee?

Duke. Never! never!
Say thou but wish a parent's love regain'd,

And it is thine again—is thine for ever!

Theo. O rapturous idea! hasten Clara,
And hither bring my child, his innocence
And cherub smiles, will make my pardon sure.

Duke. What child?

Theo. Your Theodora's.

Duke. Hah! the child of Doricourt—
My curses on it.

Theo. Curse it not, my father!
Curse not the innocent—on me, on me,
Pour out your deadliest hate; but spare an infant,
Who has not, cannot, have offended you.

Duke. Rouse not my stifled rage! awhile 'tis lull'd,
But will destroy thee in its waken'd fury;
Answer me calmly,—art thou not my child?

Theo. [*weeping*] I am, yet wish I ne'er had seen the light.

Duke. Would thou hadst never been the wife of Doricourt.

Theo. Oh that I never had!

Duke. Dost thou say so?
Then be again my child, and use the power
Kind fate has given thee to resume thy freedom:
Come to my arms; no more the wife of Doricourt,
Certain destruction hovers o'er his head,
Then leave him to his fate——

Theo. Leave whom?

Duke. A wretch who has beguil'd thee to thy ruin.

Theo. The father of my child!

Duke. Thy spirits seem bewilder'd, call them home;
Reflect on what thou art, and who I am,
A wretched, injur'd, supplicating parent.

Theo. I am the unhappy wife of Doricourt!
The miserable mother of his child!

You—my offended, and beloved parent!
I have recall'd to me my scatter'd spirits,
They aid me, thus adjured, boldly to answer;
What justice dictates to me shall be done:
Hope nothing further.

Duke. That gives all I hope,
Justice brings vengeance on the offender's head.

Theo. 'Tis fit offenders suffer, very fit;
But for the present spare me further converse;
To-morrow's sun—

Duke. Oh may its glorious beams
Light me to my revenge, my great revenge!
The arm of Justice lifted for destruction,
Tremble, thou wretched Doricourt! repent
Thy savage guilt, and make thy peace with heaven.
My hate pursues thee not beyond the grave.

[*The scene closes.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall.*

Enter THEODORA disguised, CLARA and a Man with a dark lanthern.

Cla. Madam, 'tis now the hour.

Theo. 'Tis well;
Give me the key and here wait my return.
Friend, I am ready.

Cla. Have you then no fear?

Theo. Believe me, no—'tis banish'd from my bosom.
When duty calls, fear should be thrown aside.

I go to see, and sooth a suffering husband;
And duty steels my heart against all fear.
When we act right, we seem invincible;
And whether in a dungeon damp and drear,
Or though envelop'd in night's darkest shades,
The soul disdains such outward circumstance—
By virtue's light illumin'd, she can change
A prison to a palace, night to day.

[*Exeunt*.

SCENE III.—*A Prison.*

DORICOURT *in* Chains.

Dor. O no, she dares not come; the hope was vain,
And vainer still all hope my life to save
By her interposition; will she witness
To her own guilt, to save a hated husband?
I'll think no more of her, a shallow woman!
Who hoped a husband's love would last for ever.
But to awake her from her dream of bliss,
Lavinia, fair, seducing charmer come!
Her charms will gild this dark and loathsome cell,
And blest with her I'll count each minute years,
And so have lived beyond the age of man,
E'en though I die to-morrow! yet she comes not—
O what can thus detain thee, my Lavinia?
Sure some ill fortune keeps thee from thy lover,
And now thy soul is sickening with impatience,
Counting with anger every tedious moment,

Ere thou canst fly to thy beloved Doricourt—
She comes! she comes!

[Enter THEODORA and GAOLER.]

Hah! Theodora here!

Theo. Yes, Doricourt—behold thy wretched wife.

Dor. [*sullenly*] I thought you would not come.

Theo. Fear'd you or hop'd you that I would not come?
O miserable man! thy guilty fires
Shot sparkling from thy eyes, meaning to hail
Another visitor when I approach'd thee:
Yet trust me, Doricourt, in such an hour,
So circumstanc'd, enchain'd, imprison'd,
A victim ready for the blow of justice,
The loose companions of thy wanton riots
Vainly thou hop'st to see: 'tis friendship only,
Friendship—that ever constant, ever true,
Forgiving and forgetting every fault,
That in the hour of woe dares not forsake thee;
But thinking, as thou saidst, I would not come,
Why didst thou send?

Dor. I wish'd to save my life.

Theo. And by what means?

Dor. By thine.

Theo. O spirit of the murder'd Beaufort, hear!

Dor. Give o'er thy adjuration and hear me:
The law, I know, has power to take my life,
And if thou interpose not, death is certain.
Thy husband dies for having kill'd thy lover!
Tell me, how sounds that sentence in thine ear?

Theo. Most horrible!

Dor. Consider farther still—
Thy child—

Theo. O what of him?

Dor. Is render'd, and for ever, poor and infamous.

Confiscated must be my wreck of fortune,
And thou wilt still be deem'd a guilty creature.
O glorious hecatomb to Beaufort's shade!
Life, fame, and fortune, innocence and guilt!

Theo. [*aside.*] Too true is all he says; assist me heaven!
Yes, let me suffer—only I will suffer.
Say, for I comprehend thy meaning now,
If thou couldst value life at such a price.
To thrive by means of others' infamy,
Gives but an odious privilege to breathe
A few short years, perhaps, for death will come,
And then he comes terrific, doubly arm'd,
To kill at once the body and the soul.

Dor. [*aside.*] (How her words shake me! if I struggle not,
The victory will be hers; and O Lavinia,
I ne'er shall see thee more!) Art thou decided?
Or if thou waver'st, think upon thy child
What thou wilt suffer when thine eyes behold him
A little beggar, wandering through the streets,
A prey to cold and hunger—think of this,
And use the means, yet in thy power, to save him.
There is no law to punish just revenge:
Confess thy guilt, nor crown it by my death.

Theo. Ah! hapless Theodora! wheresoe'er
I turn my eyes, disgrace and sorrow wait me!

Dor. Think that to-morrow is the dreadful day:
Must we all perish?

Theo. No: I have resolved!
My mind, though weak and trembling, is determin'd.
Expect me at the trial, Doricourt; till then,
Unhappy man, farewell!

[*Exit Theodora*

Dor. A thousand pangs

Storm this distracted bosom! Can we wear
A steady countenance, when guiltiness
Hangs heavy on our conscious, trembling souls?
Sure, guilt must ever tremble as I did,
When shrinking from the lightning, of her eye.
O! I remember when I woo'd her first,
And gain'd, by treachery, the tempting prize,
Her brow majestic, and her piercing aspect,
Made me oft fear and tremble in her presence.
'Tis now an hour, and more, since Bertrand left me;
Though wrapt in anxious wishes for his coming,
And doubting what the future may bring forth,
Yet I will woo thee, sleep, to my embraces.
Oft-times, O partial power! thou art implor'd
In vain, on beds of down; yet, on the couch,
Where misery rests, vouchsaf'st a friendly visit.
On yonder straw, just spread for my repose,
I'll try to find it—and should I succeed
For what may come, I shall be more prepar'd.
Friend, when my servant comes, conduct him to me.

[*Doricourt retires, and the scene closes.*

SCENE. *Doricourt's House.*

Enter THEODORA from the Prison.

Theo. [*lays the key on the table.*] Safe I've regain'd my dwelling, hark!—what noise!

Duke. [*without.*] Tell me which way? by heaven! I'll follow her!

[*Enters with* CLARA.

O there thou art, thou scandal to my blood!
Where hast thou been?

Theo. To visit the distrest.

Duke. Thy husband has had power to draw thee to him,
Triumphant still o'er me: O apt disguise
To hide ignoble actions! Was a prison
A seemly place for Longueville's fair daughter?
Yes, yes; her dainty limbs were not asham'd
To couch them in a dungeon with a lover!
Ah! then thou lov'st him still? I thought thee cur'd.
Deceitful Theodora!

Theo. O spare, my Lord!—spare that reproachful word!
Deceitful I am not; but very wretched!
And through the gloom of my surrounding fate,
No ray of light breaks forth that guides to comfort.
To-morrow, will my husband be accus'd,
Tried, and condemn'd, perhaps to instant death!
O agonizing thought!—

Duke. No! 'tis a glorious thought!
Art thou so tame? is there no spark of fire
Lodg'd in thy soul, to light it up to vengeance,
Both for thy wrongs and mine?

Theo. And must vengeance
Predominate o'er mercy in our bosoms?
In human bosoms! O 'tis like the fiends,
To use our power to work another's woe!
Are we not taught forgiveness? O my father!
Think of the joys we feel when we forgive.

Duke. Fond, foolish woman! — base, degenerate daughter!
Vain are thy weak regrets; for learn from me,

It is not in thy power to forgive,
More than as Christians we are bound to do.
Thy husband's life is forfeit to the laws.
The evidence is strong and clear against him;
And whether thou appear or not,—he dies!

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV

SCENE I. *The Prison.*

DORICOURT *rises from his bed of straw and comes forward.*

In feeble glimmerings through yon dismal grating,
As if reluctant entering this dire dwelling!
The morning's dawn once more salutes my eyes;
Whether they ever may behold another,
Who reads the book of fate alone can tell!
A gloomy horror weighs my spirits down:
The awful hour approaches when the sentence
Of death immediate may be pass'd upon me.
Death and the grave I understand, and dread not;
But there is something that I fear to think of;—
Something about a judgment after death,
Which Churchmen talk of, and which I have scoff'd at.
Should there be what they say—but hence these thoughts!
The few short hours I yet may have to boast

Must not be wasted: hasten my Lavinia,
And bless me with thy presence.

[Enter a gaoler and BERTRAND.]

Bertrand, welcome!
Since I dispatch'd thee it has seem'd an age,—
How now! thou look'st aghast! before this time
Hast thou ne'er seen a prison? never visited
A friend in chains? often, I warrant you—
Thy friendships have not lain among the righteous.
Cheer up and speak; what news from my Lavinia?

Ber. Alas! I fear to speak the news I bring.

Dor. Ah! what!—thou fear'st to speak!
Hast thou not seen Lavinia as I bid thee?

Ber. [*hesitating.*] Yes, I have seen her, sir—

Dor. Villain, be quick—
Say she is well, or thou hast spoke thy last.

Ber. O she is well—

Dor. 'Tis false, 'tis false, I know she's sick with grief.
Her gentle soul, affectionate and true,
Feels doubly for her Doricourt's hard fate.
Didst thou not find her drooping, quite o'erwhelm'd,
All drown'd in tears? O she is sick with grief,
Or long ere this my love had flown to me:
Perhaps she sickens e'en to death: O heavens!
And I am thus detain'd, thus vilely held.
Fly, Bertrand, fly, seek every help to save her.
Why dost thou stand thus like a fool, an ideot?—
But soft—perhaps she sent some tender message—
I am to blame, my violence affrights thee.
Tell me what said my love?

Ber. She spoke not to me.

Dor. O heavens! the horrid news o'ercame her quite:
And didst thou leave her in that state, barbarian?
Fainting, perhaps expiring, coldly leave her,
And come to torture me with worse than madness!

Ber. Sir, I would speak, but still your eager haste
Forbids by interruption; give me time
And I will faithfully relate the truth:
I found your mistress with your friend the Marquis.

Dor. My friend! I had almost forgotten him;
For mightier love still triumphs over friendship.
What said he to thy story? well I know
His generous, friendly, sympathising spirit:
He meant, no doubt, to lead Lavinia hither.
Prisons affright not those whom love and friendship
Incite to kindness.—

Ber. Ah, my dearest master,
How much you are deceiv'd! no longer boast
The Marquis is your friend, or in Lavinia
Hope to behold a mistress kind and true.

Dor. Villain! lyar!

Ber. I am not a lyar.
Sir, I entreat you to hear out my story,
And then bestow your anger where 'tis due.
The Marquis bids me say he pities you,
And will console Lavinia in your absence;
Who smil'd, and call'd him charitable friend.
Then from her finger drew a sparkling diamond,
And saying 'twas no longer valued by her,
Gave it to him, which quick he toss'd away,
Scorning, he said, t' accept th' ill-omen'd bauble.
But he directed me to bear it back
To its first owner; and lest any doubt
Should arise it was not willingly return'd,
Within a written paper they enclos'd it,
Signing it gaily both, and bid me witness
'Twas not done on compulsion, so dismiss'd me.
This is the paper, sir.

Dor. Behold the price and proof of perfidy!
It was the gift that won her to my arms;

And here to sink me deeper in perdition
Are both their names—damnation! fiends!
" Your once fond mistress and your once true friend
" Bid you adieu for ever." Torture! madness!
So young a sorceress to be perfidious!
He call'd me friend! O for a moment's freedom
To search them out, to drag them forth to shame;
The wealth of worlds I gladly would bestow
To purchase one short hour of liberty!
Tell me, good man, is it impossible?
Thou shalt attend me, I will not escape.
Take all the gold I have.—Thou shak'st thy head:
But sometimes gaolers are compassionate.

Gao. I must perform my duty, sir, which is
To keep you here: you cannot stir from hence.

Dor. O had'st thou ever known the joys of love,
Or felt thy soul tortur'd with jealous pangs,
Thou wouldst compassionate a fellow sufferer.
But prisons and their keepers are alike,
Gloomy, impenetrable, made for mischief.
Fellow, begone! come not within my grasp,
Or I shall tear thee piecemeal: off, vile chains;
Detested bonds, more terrible than death.
Sunk in the grave I may forget my wrongs,
But whilst the power of waking thought remains,
'Twill be employ'd on subjects dire and hateful.
My brain is all on fire; my senses fail me:
Ah! 'tis Lavinia in a rival's arms
That I behold escaping from my glance
In yon dark corner; O but to reach them!
Bertrand, assist me—

Ber. Sir, be more compos'd.

Dor. The sun has not twice circled round the globe
Since it beheld her hanging on my neck,
Striving with fond caresses to detain me,
And uttering vows of everlasting love.

O strong she wove her web with wily art
Insnaring to destroy!
Yet now she scorns me, riots with my rival,
And jests at the misfortunes she has caus'd.
Yes, dire enchantress, 'twas thy fatal arts
That syren-like entic'd me, till I listen'd
With pleasure to thy notes of calumny,
Which sounded still the downfal of my honor.
With art malignant thou pourtrayedst thyself;
Daub'd o'er the picture with thy own foul vices,
Then plac'd it in my view as Theodora's.
O I begin to feel! daggers are here! [*striking his breast.*
If, Theodora, thou art innocent,—and such
Thy seeming ever was I must confess,
What then is Doricourt?—

Guo. The court is sitting, and the judges wait;
Take off the prisoner's fetters.

Dor. Now then fate,
Thou soon decid'st for me: O power resistless!
If thou by mortal prayer art to be mov'd,
Reject not my petition; 'tis to live
But one short day, I ask not lengthen'd years.
Give me but time to compass my design,—
A momentary respite from confinement,
And Doricourt aveng'd, shall die with joy.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A court of Justice.*

Judges, Secretaries, Attendants; the DUKE and CARLOS.
[*Doricourt is brought in.*]

Judge. Bring in the prisoner. Unhappy man,

You stand arraign'd for murder. Hadst thou weigh'd
Th' enormous magnitude of such a crime,
Thy trembling hand had fail'd to perpetrate
Thy bloody purpose, and had stopt suspended,
Whilst the arresting voice of pow'rful nature
Had sav'd thee from the base, unnatural deed;
For as 'tis baseness thus to steal away
What by no human art can be restor'd,
So is the crime of murder most unnatural,
Because we all are kindred, and one Father
Presides o'er all, who will demand of thee
Thy brother's blood; nor canst thou have to plead
Thou wast provok'd by passion, but didst coolly,
And with deliberate malice, lay a snare
To catch th' unwary, and to slaughter innocence.
And, as 'tis deem'd all such enormous crimes
Demand immediate chastisement, we therefore,
High Judges of this city, have decreed,
Ere four-and-twenty hours are elaps'd,
To bring to trial every great offender;
That to the guilty punishment be speedy,
To strike the greater terror; or, if innocent,
They may, as such, be quicker justified.
We have examin'd various witnesses,
Who all agree in proof that thou art guilty.
But there is yet another to be heard;
Who has demanded leave to speak in court,
Which we have granted; and if after that
There appear none to plead in thy behalf,
We shall proceed to sentence.

Duke. Noble Judges!
Great human arbiters of life and death!
I stand before you here, the most aggriev'd,
Most wretched being that e'er cried for justice.
I had a daughter once! What father's heart

Hearing these words, but adds his pangs to mine?
I boasted once a brave adopted son.
O dreadful retrospect! our joys, when past,
Serve but to doubly point the present anguish.
For his lost children hear a father plead.

Judge. My Lord, we are prepar'd to grant to all
What justice shall decree. My Lord, proceed.

Duke. How bloom'd my daughter in her youthful charms,
Delight of every eye, and pride of mine,
I dwell not on, for beauty's gaudy flower
Blooms but to fade; it was her fairer mind
And noble soul, display'd from earliest years,
Render'd her worth inestimable.
Contending Lords sued humbly for her favor,
To whom she still replied with modest grace,
That she depended on a father's will.
She knew from infancy her hand decreed
A gift to Beaufort, for his father's sake.
The youth I bred with anxious, tender care,
To merit the rich gift of Theodora,
And found my wishes answer'd to their height.
The time approach'd to perfect my design;
All wore the face of gladness, all prepar'd
To hail the far-fam'd hero; and my daughter
Seem'd to attend the hour in meek obedience.
'Twas he—that wretch—who with insidious arts
Seduc'd her from me, fill'd her timorous mind
With fears of Beaufort, spoke him rough and fierce,
Merely the soldier, one who laugh'd at love,
And own'd no other motive than his interest.
The poor deceiv'd, bewilder'd Theodora
Thought Doricourt her friend, who thus had warn'd her.
Grateful she thank'd, and soon she pitied him,
For endless love he swore, and endless sorrow.

His specious manners triumph'd, and he stole her,
Like a base robber, in the dead of night.
O fatal, fatal theft of peace and glory!
For, soon awaken'd from her blissful dream,
My child bewail'd her peace and glory lost.
His purpose gain'd, unmask'd her husband stood,
And, wanting nobleness of mind to value,
As it deserv'd, the treasure he had stolen,
In a short space grew tir'd, and threw it from him:
And with the meanest reptiles that defile
The face of nature, shap'd in human forms,
Grew prodigal alike of fame and fortune.
Remorseless villain! was it not enough
To have despoil'd me of a Theodora,
But thou must exercise thy hellish arts
Against my other sole remaining child,
To whom thou ow'dst a thousand thousand favors?
My Lords, with rage and grief nearly o'ercome,
I must cut short the rest.
I know ere this his wife had wanted bread,
His child a home to shield its shivering limbs,
And he himself by his relentless creditors
Been dragg'd to prison, there to pine out life.
But for his friend; and yet this friend he slew
List'ning to syren arts, he nurs'd suspicion
In his black breast till it o'ercame control;
His heart, to virtue dead, dar'd to impute
Unworthy motives to the best of actions:
Between his wife and Beaufort fram'd a meeting,
Pretended absence: but with devilish cunning
Skilful to work the ruin of himself,
Stole on the unsuspecting and unarm'd,
And in his benefactor's bosom plung'd his sword.
For this black deed, my Lords, I claim your justice,
And life for life e'en Heaven itself ordains.

Judge (to Doricourt). Hearest thou not what has been urg'd against thee?
Answer, unhappy man. If thou canst plead
Aught to defend thee, speak; thou shalt be heard.

Dor. I have no friends—I am by all forsaken.
He that I kill'd had merited to die;
He wrong'd me, and 'twas therefore I destroy'd him.

Duke. O hadst thou proof to offer of that wrong,
These lips should be the first to call thee guiltless.
But thou beliest my child, and blott'st a fame
Bright as the azure of unclouded heaven.
O hear him not, ye venerable Judges.

Judge. My Lord, we stain not with the least suspicion
The fame of Doricourt's fair wife. It avails not
To lengthen out the trial: every circumstance
Is clear against the prisoner; all is ended;
Unless he has some witness to produce
Who can deliver aught in his behalf.
Knowst thou of any?

Dor. I expected one,
But find my hopes deceiv'd.

Judge. Let it be cried
Aloud in court, if any one can speak
In favor of the prisoner, let him answer.

Cryer. If any one can show cause why sentence may not immediately be pronounced, let them speak.

Judge. There answers none.

People. Give back—make way—
Room for the prisoner's witness.

[Enter THEODORA and CLARA, both in mourning.]

Dor. It is my wife!

Duke. O heavens, 'tis Theodora!

Judge. Keep silence all.

Theo. My Lords, in humbleness I bow me down,
And reverently acknowledge your high judgments.

I hither come to plead a husband's cause.

Duke. To plead for Doricourt!

Dor. To plead for me!

Judge. Lady, few words are needful. Thus it stands:
If, when your husband slew the noble Beaufort,
He but aveng'd his wrongs, he is not guilty.

Theo. I am content you think me what you please.
Guilty I am—but—

Duke. O she is most innocent.
He hath entangled her in some vile snare.
She speaks not plainly. Villain, clear her fame.
O speak again, my daughter.

Theo. I have spoken.
If not too late to save a husband's life,
I'm satisfied.

Judge. Break up the court, and set the prisoner free.

Dor. O unexpected blessing, boundless transport!
My Lords, I give you thanks. For you, Lord Duke,
Receive again your daughter. I renounce her.
She's a strange mixture of deceit and goodness.
All hell is here—'tis fit she come not near it.

[*Exit Doricourt*.

[*The Judges all go off the stage; the* DUKE *comes forward, as does* THEODORA, *whom* CLARA *supports; he is wrapt up in gloomy silence, with arms folded, and eyes bent to earth. After a struggle with herself for composure,* THEODORA *looks fearfully at the* DUKE, *and at last speaks*.]

Theo. May I yet call you by the name of father?

Duke. My daughter guilty!—Doricourt escap'd!
O heavy evils both! Is there no remedy?
There can be none, since Theodora's false,
And Beaufort's once fair fame is foully tainted.
Thou seeming prodigy of perfect goodness,
The coldest icicle, the new-fall'n snow,

Is but as was thy fame.
What is it now? and dar'st thou hope for shelter?
Scorn'd by the world, rejected by thy husband!
Are these the pleas to gain thee my protection?

Theo. Alas! except for death, I have no hope;
My only refuge lies in his cold arms,
Where, when I sink to rest, a father's heart
May pity one, who can no more offend him.

Duke. And dost thou think thy death will end my shame?
Will not thy deeds survive? a vile memorial,
Which to the dust will humble these grey hairs.

Theo. O be they rather crown'd with length of days;
And Heaven, in mercy, teach you to forget
You ever had a daughter. My weak heart
Begins to sink beneath the dreadful conflict.
Farewell, my Lord—I take a long farewell,
Yet there may come a time—but not on earth—
When, before Heaven's high impartial throne,
Your Theodora, clear'd of all disguise,
And cleans'd by sufferings and by penitence,
May boldly challenge a dear father's love.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Doricourt's House.*

Enter THEODORA and CLARA.

Theo. Ye walls, that oft have echoed my sad sighs,
Scenes of continued, various miseries,
To take my everlasting leave I come.
Your once-acknowledg'd mistress is an outcast.
Why dost thou weep, kind Clara? Not to me
Should soft compassion's tears and sighs be given:
I have deserv'd my fate, and hail its horrors.
Yet will officious memory represent
How chang'd each circumstance since Theodora
First enter'd hither, as the wife of Doricourt:
Exulting joy led on my careless steps,
Triumph'd throughout, and brighten'd all around;
I hop'd the bliss was lasting as 'twas great;
But Hope, a beauteous phantom, pictures fair,

Each scene of future life; with mimic dyes
She tinges every thought, like Sol's bright ray
When falling on the dew-bespangled mead;
The radiant tints, fair as the morn is fair,
Strike the beholder's eye with pleasing wonder,
But with the slightest touch each bubble bursts,
Sparkles no more, and vanishes in air.
So fares it with our earthly happiness;
'Tis but the dew-drop of a summer's morning;
Which, if it 'scape the hand of early violence,
Is, by the quick-succeeding noon-tide heat,
Dried up, and seen no more.

Enter ANSELM.

Ans. Madam, I come
To execute commands, heard with regret,
And scarce my faltering tongue knows how to speak them.

Theo. Take courage, Anselm—fearless speak thy orders.
Obedience is not more thy task than mine.
Where hast thou left thy master?

Ans. Furious, wild,
Breathing forth vows of vengeance, he is flown
To seek out his perfidious friend and mistress.
Scarce found he time to say, "Anselm, be gone;
"Haste to my house, bid Theodora thence."
Sorrowing I homeward came. Madam, alas!
My comprehension is too mean to fathom
The depth of this sad business; but I here
Devote the scanty remnant of my days
To serve my innocent and injur'd mistress;
For such she surely is.

Cla. O doubt it not.
There is some mystery when vice thus triumphs.
But, Anselm, thou and I will ne'er forsake her.

Theo. No, my kind friends, ye both must here remain.
An infant's welfare claims thy tender cares, (*To Clara.*)

And never, Anselm, did thy wretched master
More need thy faithful service than at present.
It is impossible his dream can last.
Horrid it is; such as in fev'rish illness
Many have often known, and known how grateful,
When wak'd from troubled sleep, 'tis to behold
A friend at hand to soothe and cherish them.
Clara, thou hast not yet perform'd my bidding.
Say to each kind domestic, 'tis my wish
I may depart unseen.
I know their friendly hearts; but mine, just now,
Needs no new anguish, and their grateful sorrow
Would overcome me quite. When thou hast finish'd,
Attend me in my chamber.

[*Exit Theodora*.

Ans. Alas! that I should live to see this day!
Where will our mistress seek out an asylum?
'Tis not three years since these glad eyes beheld her
The joy of every heart, belov'd, ador'd,
Her very footsteps bless'd, for she was ever
Most kind and pious; yet I well remember
Some whispers ran, that her proud father's anger
Would reach, in time, her heart.

Cla. Aye, there it lies;
'Tis that has work'd out all this dreadful mischief.
Against a parent's will she wedded Doricourt;
And rarely, Anselm, do such matches prosper.
His fascinating manners charm'd the eye
Of inexperienc'd and ill-judging youth,
And Theodora left a father's arms,
Renounc'd his blessing, tarnish'd her own glory,
And all to gratify a short-liv'd passion.
Ah! little think the gay and youthful fair ones,
When forming in their minds bright scenes of bliss,
What clouds may rise to overcast the scene.

Yet heaven-inflicted ills are light, to those
That follow fast upon our erring steps—
Useless regret, and painful, deep repentance—
For conscience, when offended, knows no mercy.
Heavens! 'tis the Duke I see. Anselm, retire.
I will abide his coming; and who knows
But pity may have soften'd his rough spirit.

[*Exit Anselm. Clara retires.*

Enter DUKE.

Duke. Why have I wander'd to this hated dwelling?
Dost thou yet hope to triumph, pow'rful nature?
No, no; my heart is steel'd, it bids defiance
E'en to thy inspirations. All I seek,
In following thus the wife of Doricourt,
(Never again my lips shall name her otherwise),
Is but once more to load her with reproaches.

Cla. (*advancing.*) My Lord, I hope in pity you come hither
To save your daughter from the last despair.

Duke. Let her despair and die. It matters not
How soon those lose their lives who lose their virtue.

Cla. O there is something that to human eyes
Appears impenetrable, wonderful!
Time may unfold the truth. Alas! my Lord,
Guilty she cannot be. 'Tis not at once
The mind e'er falls from virtue. Though she left
A father's house unblest yet disobedience
Has been her only fault.

Duke. Thou art her agent,
And every act unruly passions lead to
Was ever sure to meet thy mean assistance.
How dar'st thou palliate such enormous guilt?
Has not her voice proclaim'd it, whilst the crowd
Heard, wonder-struck, the criminal confession?
O let me haste and shroud me in some desert,

Where through the dark thick gloom no eye may pierce,
No voice intrude to break the solemn stillness:
There let me drag out what I've left of life,
Forget the world and all I once possest.

Cla. O go not thus! upon my knees—

Duke. Off, wretched woman.
Think not to stay me by thy paltry arts,
Let go thy hold, or I will dash thee from me.

Cla. Your Theodora! see her once again;
A few short moments, ere she die of grief.
Assist me, Anselm, (*enter Anselm*) help me to detain him.

Duke. Thus, then, I shake thee, like a reptile, off—
Hah, fellow! what would'st thou?

Ans. My Lord, there's one without desires to see you,
On an affair, he says, of highest moment.

Duke. Tell him I come. Well may'st thou weep, vile woman:
Thou hast long scores to quit with angry heaven—
Adultery! murder! swell the dread account,
To which thy name stands fix'd as an accomplice.
Go, say to her, whom once I call'd my daughter,
That if she can restore the dead to life,
And from her fame wipe the foul blots away,
I may forgive, till then my curses on her.

[*Exit Duke.*

Cla. Great heavenly power! thou that read'st the heart
Alone, wilt judge, and ever lov'st to pardon,—
A father's unweigh'd curse decides not thee.

Enter THEODORA.

Theo. Clara, methought I heard my father's voice,
In angry loud debate—is he then gone?

Cla. Madam, I tried, but vainly, to detain him;
Perhaps he fear'd to see you, lest your grief,
Might tempt him to forgiveness.

Theo. I have no longer hopes of his forgiveness,
For all is lost except my hopes in heaven.
Hast thou fulfill'd my orders, is all finished?
I feel impatient to begin my journey,—
The path before me now lies plain, direct,
And little time will serve me to perform it:
O! to attain that home my bosom pants for.

Cla. Alas, what home? your looks speak dreadful calmness.

Theo. That home we all are destin'd to, the grave.
Start not, for canst thou think I wish to live?
Or, if I were so mean, could it be possible?
Deem'st thou within this breast a heart so hard,
That it resists the doubly pointed dart,
Thrown by a parent's and a husband's hand?
Or that the murder of the noble Beaufort
Weighs not my spirits down? nor loss of fame,
Which I have late sustain'd, though innocent?
And for the last and worst of every evil,
Doom'd to eternal absence from my child!
O rightly said, that grief but seldom kills,
Since I have borne such heavy griefs, yet live.
Clara, I waste the time in weak complainings;
Know then, I bend my melancholy steps,
To seek kind shelter in the neighbouring convent.
The Abbess has consented to receive me
In memory of a long and steady friendship,
Between her and my mother—farewell, Clara.
My friend thou long hast been, continue such,
Nor think thy mistress would presume to ask
The friendship of the virtuous, did she know
Herself an alien from bright Virtue's empire;
Thy hand, my Clara—may kind heaven preserve thee.

[*Going out, meets the Duke.*

Duke. Return, return, my fair, afflicted daughter.

Theo. Good heavens! what words were those?

Duke. Know'st thou to guard thy heart against surprise?

Theo. O mock me not, my Lord; declare your meaning—
My soul, impatient, sickens at delay,
My husband may return—

Enter BERTRAND.

Ber. O horror! horror!

Theo. Whence this new alarm?

Ber. He is expiring,
My murdered master.

Duke. Mysterious powers! when will thy wonders end!
Thy master murder'd, say'st thou? speak, by whom?
My bosom has its fears, kind fate avert them.

Ber. Forth from the court he rush'd with furious haste,
To seek Lavinia and his treacherous friend,
Whom soon, alas, he found; and entering fiercely
The chamber where they rioted secure;
Loudly declar'd his purpose of revenge,
Then aim'd a desperate blow, but his rais'd arm
Lavinia caught, and gave her favorite time
To reach his sword, and plunge it in the breast
Of my unhappy master:, I had follow'd
His steps with swiftest speed, but came too late
To save him from the stroke; it was these arms
Receiv'd him, bleeding, ere he fell to earth,
And in a faint, expiring voice he order'd
He might be hither borne ere life forsook him.
Behold he comes.

Doricourt is brought on in a chair, the stage is filled with servants and other spectators, who had accompanied him.

Dor. Gently! O I am lost!—there, set me down;
Heaven grant a little time, if not in mercy.

To such a wretch as I am, yet in justice
To those whom I have injur'd; Noble Duke—

[*the Duke goes out.*

Alas, he's gone! living, I own, his hate
I richly have deserv'd, but now, in death,
I hop'd his pardon. Theodora, thou
Hast been more injur'd, canst thou pardon me?

Theo. O be thou sure of my forgiveness, Doricourt,
Nay more, of pity and returning love,
So thou repent thy injuries. Great Heaven
Propitious hear my prayer! O shorten not
His moments of repentance, let him live;
Or, if offended Justice claim a victim,
My life I offer in exchange for his.

Dor. Kind, generous Theodora! 'tis too late
I am become a convert to thy virtues;
To my astonish'd ears, the wretch Lavinia
Confess'd thy wondrous goodness, own'd 'twas hate
Of merit so transcendant, that had prompted
The tales she forg'd to blast thy spotless fame;
Then pour'd out curses on me for believing,
With mean credulity, her slanderous falsehoods;
And bade me cleanse my murderous hands from blood,
From a friend's blood, an unoffending friend.
O heavens! methinks I hear her curses still.

Theo. Ah, Doricourt, forget the dreadful past.

Dor. Impossible, while memory holds her seat!
And after this frail being is shook off,
What horrors worse than death I may encounter
Excite the wish I still could linger here;
But O! I feel 'tis vain, the blow is struck,
Eternal justice must be satisfied.

[*appears to faint.*

Theo. Help, Clara, help, is there no hope to save him!

Dor. [*recovering.*] All help is useless, and all hope is vain;
Death's harbinger, a momentary calm,
Heaven grants in mercy: be ye witness all:—
I solemnly declare my wife is innocent.
O he I rashly slew deserv'd not death:
'Tis I alone am guilty; pardon, pardon,
All ye whom I have wrong'd—but chiefly thou
To whom atonement cannot now be made,—
Blest spirit of the murder'd noble Beaufort!
When we shall meet before the throne of heaven,
O witness not against the soul of Doricourt!
My Theodora! injur'd saint, farewell!
My child too! but 'tis past, I can no more— [*faints.*]

Theo. Alas! he's gone!

[*She hides her face on his shoulder; the door opens, and the Duke enters leading Beaufort, who with a pale countenance and slow pace advances towards Theodora. All start—Clara screams, which rouses her mistress, who lifting up her head sees Beaufort leaning on her father, she clasps her hands in an agony of surprise, on which Doricourt, who had only fainted, opens his eyes and sees Beaufort and the Duke.*]

Dor. Image of horror! wherefore art thou come?
Ah! shield me, save me from him!

Theo. Sure 'tis some vision of my sickly brain,
No real form—

Duke. Yes, Theodora, 'tis the living Beaufort.
Thy husband's sword fail'd to perform the deed
That perfidy had plann'd.

Theo. Now heaven be prais'd!
O cheer thee, Doricourt,—look up my husband,
Behold he lives, and thou art not a murderer.

Dor. Let him not approach, he comes for vengeance:
His face is ghastly, and his eyeballs glare:

Too sure I murder'd him! O mercy, mercy!

Theo. Canst thou not speak, or art thou but a phantom?
O answer me!

Beau. I am no phantom, but thy living friend,
Snatch'd from the jaws of death: I came to learn
Thy fate, thou matchless excellence, and save
From farther evils thy unhappy husband,
Deceiv'd, he sought my life, but truth has reach'd him.

Dor. He speaks! it is his voice! it is himself!
How wert thou rescued from my slaughtering sword?

Beau. 'Twas loss of blood that caus'd my seeming
death,
And the mock funeral was contriv'd by Carlos,
Who fear'd some new attempt against his master.
I heard not of the trial till 'twas past.

Dor. The trial, aye!—that brings to my remembrance
A doubt I would remove; yet 'tis a small one,
Unworthy me to speak or her to answer.

Beau. O I conjure thee speak it.

Dor. [*to his wife.*] On the trial,
How to asperse thy fame couldst thou be tempted?

Theo. O save me from the horrid retrospection!
Yet to remove your doubt, I will confess
My evidence was all a studied falsehood;
By sacred pity urg'd to save the life
Of Doricourt, so ill prepar'd to die.
Could I, who thought his soul was sunk in vice,
Loaded with black and unrepented sins,
Unpitying send him to that dread tribunal
From whence lies no appeal, and have the power
But not the will to save him from perdition?
Light seem'd the earthly ruin I preferr'd
To the dire fall of an immortal soul!

Beau. O most heroic woman!

Duke. Noble daughter!

How few thy faults, how numerous thy virtues,
Let all thy sex with boastful pride confess:
I glory in thee now: what, though the storm
Has bent thee low to earth, it is o'erpast:
The sun of truth dispels the clouds of error,
And thy fair fame uplifts thee to the skies.

Dor. It is enough, and now I yield to fate.
My wife is justified,—my friend yet lives.
Duke Longueville, thou wilt not now refuse
To shelter suffering virtue: O forget
Wrongs that so heavily have been reveng'd:
Beaufort may yet be all you once design'd him,—
Your daughter's husband, and her child's protector.
Wilt thou not, Beaufort, be the orphan's friend?

Theo. Alas! alas!

Beau. O Doricourt, 'tis not thy death I wish.

Dor. Cheer then my parting moments with the promise
That thou wilt take my child to thy protection.

Beau. Behold to heaven thus solemnly I swear!—

Dor. Thou shalt not swear —I know thy noble heart:
Thine too, my Theodora:—now 'tis past—
The bitterness of death! the earth recedes!
May heaven accept my late though true repentance!

[*dies.*

THE END.

NOTE ON THEODORA.

As our publication becomes known, the stock of our materials is augmented, and the probability is enlarged that every new number shall be better than the preceding. In the present we are enabled to introduce to the public a female writer of no ordinary genius. Less philosophical than Miss Baillie, and perhaps less endowed with imagination, she has evinced, in the tragedy of THEODORA, the possession of, at least, equal elegance of feeling, and of the power of exciting pathetic commiseration. We do not assert that she is a woman of equal talents, because we have not yet the means of instituting any comparison between them. Miss Baillie has published volumes, and this tragedy is, we understand, the first which this lady has presented to the public. But we do not hesitate to say that no single piece, either in "*The Series of Plays on the Passions*," or in the "*Miscellaneous Dramas*," of Miss Baillie, however much they may excel THEODORA in flights of fancy, is superior to it in interest. If we could bring forward no other play than this pathetic tragedy, we would consider the object of our publication attained, and assert that we had demonstrated, beyond contradiction, that it is not the dramatic genius of the nation which is to blame, for the inferiority of the new exhibitions on the stage, but something in the system of management at the theatres. This piece has been fifteen years in the hands of the players!

The characters are conceived with considerable force—that of Theodora in particular is a fine combination of the beauties of Mrs. Beverley in the Gamester, and of Belvidera in Venice Preserved. The Duke of Longueville is, however, in our opinion, decidedly the best, and we think it a highly original portrait. His passion, which at the first view appears somewhat outrageous and unnatural, by the mode which it leads him to seek its gratification, will be found, upon a careful consideration, to be but the diseased workings of anger, though he himself feels it as revenge. In this respect, whenever Miss Baillie shall favor the world with her developement of the passion of Anger, the Duke of Longueville of our Author, will afford a curious point of comparison, and furnish the more voluminous critics with the means of estimating the respective intellectual powers of two very extraordinary Ladies. Doricourt is a strong, but not improbable or unnatural, picture of libertine infatuation.

At the present moment, while a certain philosophess, celebrated more on account of her political connexions than her merits deserve, is so much in vogue among our fashionables, we feel a degree of patriotic pride in having occasion to advert to the superiority of our own *fairer* countrywomen. In her peculiar line, the perfectability philosophy, Madame de Stael is far below the almost forgotten Mary Wolstonecraft, both in dignity of thought and eloquence of elucidation. In a much higher class of literature, the dramatic, in which Miss Baillie stands above the females of every other country, the Baroness has scarcely any place at all ; and we have only to mention the name of Miss Edgeworth, to make those who would set up the presumptuous Frenchwoman as the first female writer of the age, blush at their inadvertant idolatry. Madame's character of Corinna, the most celebrated of all her

attempts at the delineation of character, is a palpable plagiarism from that of Clementina in Sir Charles Grandison. Yet is the author, for the masculine swagger of her philosophical dogmas, and the accidental piquancy of the language, in which she has written, represented as little less interesting to the welfare of the Christian world than the woman in the Revelation, who fled into the wilderness, as the Baroness came to England, because of a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, that stood ready to devour her man-child, as the Emperor Napoleon would have done Madame's book on Germany, "of which she was travailing in birth and pained to be delivered."

THE WORD OF HONOR.

A Comedy.

IN THREE ACT

CHARACTERS.

SIR ROBERT, Patron of Edward and Caroline.

EDWARD, Husband of Caroline: acting as Secretary in the Family of Sir Robert.

THOMAS, House-Steward to Sir Robert.

HENRY, Son to Sir Robert.

CLODDY, a Clown.

CAROLINE, the Wife of Edward: Housekeeper to Sir Robert.

SYLVIA, Sister to Edward, and married to Henry.

THE

WORD OF HONOR;

A Comedy.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room.*

On one side a desk, EDWARD *writing; on the other a table,* CAROLINE *sewing.*

Car. Edward! my love.

Edw. Well, Caroline, what want ye?

Car. You have, I think, a heavy task this morning.

Edw. I have.

Car. Such constant writing is not wise.

Edw. When there is need, I must not spare myself.

Car. Come, breathe a little; stop, and chat with me.

Edw. Peace; let me write—I have no time for trifles.

Car. My dearest Edward, you afflict me greatly,
In every day I see you more unquiet,

Silent, and shy. What is it that molests you?
In the short month we have been man and wife,
How has the fervor of your love abated!

Edw. No, Caroline, in that you do me wrong;
I love you every moment more and more,
Still thanking Heaven for having made you mine.

Car. Then why so peevish, distant, and dejected?

Edw. I cannot tell—but I have much at heart.
My father has not yet approv'd our marriage,
Nor to the letters which Sir Robert wrote
In our behalf, yet sent the slightest answer.
He has assign'd us nothing to support us,
And we are here but as Sir Robert's servants.
The strange elopement of my sister too--
A thousand cares, from all these causes springing,
Prey on my heart, and keep me from repose.

Car. All true. But sure our servitude is gentle:
We are together; and our worthy master
More as his children than as servants treats us.
Let us be thankful for the good we have,
Nor pine for that which may not make us happier

Edw. Ah! Caroline, you speak but of the rose,
While in my breast I feel the rankling thorn.

Car. Who can obtain the rose without the thorn?
How many, Edward, must endure the wound
And ne'er enjoy the flower!

Edw. *(aside.)* Could she but know
What I feel here. *(lays his hand on his bosom.)*

Car. O think what we have suffer'd!
How blest am I to sit beside you thus,
To work with you, and share with you my hire.

(He rises and comes to her.)

Edw. Thanks, my dear Caroline, a thousand thanks.
But could we gain some other livelihood,
Or in some other house, I should be pleased.

Car. Edward, what is there here that you dislike?
Have we not here much good already gain'd?
What tears we shed before we found this comfort!
Much has Sir Robert done already for us,
And more has promis'd; nor is he a man
That in his word will fail. Then his son too——

Edw. (aside.) Ah! there she probes my sore.

Car. He has to me
Shown many tokens of the purest friendship—
I know not, Edward, a more noble youth.

Edw. Henry, you think, has some affection for you?

Car. Yes, much, I know he has.

Edw. And had he not
The like before your marriage?

Car. True, he had;
But then his love was of another kind.

Edw. (aside.) Now this is what I never can believe.

Car. I would as soon that you suspected me
As that most true and virtuous gentleman.

Edw. But I am busy, and we waste the time.

(He returns to the desk, and begins to write.)

Car. I will not trouble you. Alas, my heart!
He that so lov'd me, and should know me well,
To be thus alter'd in a little month.

Enter THOMAS.

Tho. Our master, Mr. Edward, calls for you.

Edw. Which?

Tho. Sir Robert, sure. Did not you know
That Master Henry's to the country gone
On some affair of the estate.

Edw. Aye, true.

Tho. Well go, Sir Robert waits.

Edw. Yes, presently.
I want but two lines to complete this copy.
I have a huge suspicion of this knave. *(aside.)*

Tho. (softly.) I have a secret for you, Caroline.

Car. Pray tell it me.

Tho. (softly.) No, not just now.

Edw. (aside.) What's this?

Tho. This is fine linen truly, and these shirts
Are for Sir Robert?

Car. No; but for my husband.

Edw. (aside.) What can he mean by this sly whispering?

Car. I am all anxious, Sir, to hear this secret.

Tho. (to Edward.) Pray do make haste; master will be impatient.

Edw. Why do you press me so?—what is't to you?

Car. Go, my dear Edward, when Sir Robert calls.
It is not wise to make him wait for you.

Edw. But I have yet to make out this account.

Car. (to Thomas.) Make you it for him.

Tho. With the greatest pleasure

Edw. And tell Sir Robert that I was not able?

Car. How many frivolous delays you make.

Edw. Poh, foolish girl, do not vex yourself.

Car. I pray you, Edward, only do your duty.

Edw. My duty! well, I will.

Tho. Where is th' account?

Edw. There: be so good——*(aside.)* I must dissemble with them. [*Exit Edward.*

Tho. What is the matter with your spouse to-day?

Car. He suffers much that still his father writes not.
But what is it that you have got to tell?

Tho. A thing of very serious import.

Car. To me, or to my husband?

Tho. No, to neither;
But to this ancient honorable house
Of great concern, for it affects the heir.

Car. I thought it something that affected us.—
Then why not tell it me in Edward's hearing?

Thom. I say it freely that I much esteem him,
Much for himself and much on your account.
But this is something that requires great prudence,
And therefore will I only trust yourself.

Car. Think you not, Edward

Thom. Yes, I like him greatly

Car. But what is this important mystery?

Thom. Give me your word not to divulge it then.

Car. Why you should know me.

Thom. True; therefore I trust you.
But pledge your word of honor to me first.

Car. Then by my honor I will not divulge.

Thom. You know there is a match, of rich account,
Afoot, between Sir Robert and a widow,
For master Henry.

Car. Well, and what of it?

Thom. And you must know that a sad breach impends;
For master Henry has plung'd deep in love
O'er head and ears, with a young fair-fac'd madam.

Car. It is but natural for youth to love,
And to be loth to marry with old age.

Thom. But here the sorrow is, that this, his passion,
Is for his rank a most misplac'd attachment.

Car. I guess now who it is, the stranger lady;
She whom he rescued from the highwayman?
Who—what is she?

Thom. No one can tell me that.
She came to town alone, no one knows wherefrom,
Nor how she lives, nor what she does in town:
She visits no one, and no one admits
But only Henry, and save with himself
A night or two to see the theatres,
She never stirs abroad. In sooth to say,
She is a marvellous romantic damsel.

Car. It grieves my very heart: I did not think

That Henry ever could have sunk to this.
Fear you that he will marry? What's her name?

Thom. Sylvia, Sylvia—I forget the other,
But it has too a rare poetic tinkle;—
I have a letter from him for her here.

Car. Will you deliver it?

Thom. No, that I wont.
The love I bear him, and this worthy house,
Which I have ate the bread of, man and boy,
For more than fifty years, has made me do
What he may count a very great offence:—
Look, I have open'd it.

Car. Good! and what says he?

Thom. I cannot tell, for it is all outlandish.

Car. Let me look at it? It is writ in French.

Thom. I thought so. Now as you can read it, do.

Car. But how is this, it is address'd to no one?

Thom. It was sent under cover.

Car. Nor subscrib'd?

Thom. There he was prudent, lest it had been lost.

Car. Nor do I, Thomas, think the writing his.

Thom. 'Tis certainly not done as he is wont;—

[*showing another letter.*]

But here he speaks to me plainly enough.—
This is, you see, his own free penmanship.

Car. It is so. While I read, look no one comes
Their love, indeed, is far advanc'd.

Thom. Ay, ay,
But how shall it be thwarted?—out upon't—

Car. Leave me this letter, I will speak to him.

Thom. He says to me he'll be in town to-night.

Car. And to his mistress—yes, he says the same.
Be you attentive, and apprise me duly
When you have learnt that he is come to her.

[*she lays the letter on the table.*]

Thom. But leave not so the letter open there,
It may by chance fall into hands unsafe:
I pray you put it out of sight—that's right.

[Enter EDWARD.]

Edw. [*aside.*] Still at their conference! There's something here.

Thom. I trust the whole to you—

Car. [illegible]bt not my efforts.

Thom. Beware that neither Edward nor Sir Robert
Suspect our secret—

Edw. [*aside.*] Oh it is all certain.

Thom. I should have made this copy.

Edw. [*advances.*] Well, good Thomas,
And have you finish'd the account for me?
It is not yet begun!

Tho. My spectacles—

Car. Tell me what was it that Sir Robert wanted?

Edw. He had a letter?—How a man of business
Like you not to have made so small a thing
In such a time—

Tho. I miss'd my spectacles.

Edw. I understand: Let it alone—

Tho. Well, well,
[*aside.*] Suspicious fury, but I must be gone.

[*Exit Thomas.*

Car. What letter has Sir Robert got for you?

Edw. I do not ask you to repeat to me
What Thomas has been saying.

Car. He?

Edw. Ay, he.

Car. Why what could he have worth repeating, Edward?

Edw. Come, make no mystery of what may vex me.

Car. Mystery! what mystery? you grow strange.

Edw. I will not be put off with idle words,
Did I not come when he was whisp'ring you?
Thank heaven, I have good ears and other senses.

Car. What could you hear to breed in you suspicion?

Edw. Come, come, my lady, tell me all at once:
What is this secret that I must not know?
No, nor Sir Robert; what is it, I say?

Car. Edward, you know me well—

Edw. But what is this?

Car. Nothing that you should know, or that concerns you.
I am a woman faithful to my honor,
And you disparage me by doubting thus.

Edw. All very just, my love, but can you say
That Thomas has not told you something secret?

Car. I own he has.

Edw. And why should you conceal
This secret from your husband?

Car. Why! because
I pledg'd to him my word not to divulge.

Edw. This was not wise in a true honest wife.

Car. Edward, you pain me.

Edw. You offend me much.

Car. Offend! of what offence do you complain?
This would be none if you had not against me,
Suspicious dreams and jealousies unjust.

Edw. To end debate, tell me the thing at once.

Car. Believe you me a woman of right honor?

Edw. I do—

Car. Can such a woman then forgo
The sacred obligation of a promise?

Edw. This is to me vexatious subtilty.

Car. Yes, I am subtile, I desire to hold
My own esteem and yet not forfeit yours.
My heart is pure, and my integrity
Commands me not to speak. To suspect me!

Edw. Yes, you.

Car. Ungrateful man, so to insult—

Edw. Do not imagine I shall be in fear,

Because the master of this house protects you.

Car. Edward, Edward, you transgress all bound.

Edw. I have no need of him, I care him not.

Car. Hush, for the love of heaven. O shame, rash man.

Edw. I will no longer stay beneath his roof.

Car. Restrain yourself, for shame, if not for me.

Edw. I will say what I please and do too, madam.

Enter SIR ROBERT.

Sir R. What noise is this? what means this scolding clamor?

Car. Nothing, Sir.

Edw. Does she say nothing — does she?

I say that there is something, something, Sir.

Sir R. But of what kind?

Car. Sir, I am in despair.

He has for me no longer love or mercy.

Edw. She has no reason to complain of me.

Sir R. And have you reason to complain of her?

Edw. Yes, more—much more, Sir, than you can imagine.

Car. Heavens! will you make me lose this good man's favor?

Edw. I'll out of this house straight.

Car. Alas, poor me.

Sir R. And you will quit this house — tell me for what?

Edw. Because between her and old plotting Thomas,

Are facts that neither you nor I must know.

Sir R. Nor he, nor I.

Car. Sir—

Edw. Sir, we are betray'd.

Sir R. By whom?

Edw. By her whom you believe so virtuous.

Sir R. Caroline!

Car. Oh, Sir, I am innocent.

Edw. Ask if she has not secrets with old Thomas,
And why they must be hid from you and me.

Sir R. Is this true, Caroline?

Car. Yes, Sir, it is.
Thomas has trusted me with something, deem'd
Proper to be conceal'd; and I have promis'd
Not to divulge. Would you advise me, Sir,
To violate a vow? Think you not woman
Bound by her pledged word as well as man?
Honor is common, Sir, to all the species,
And such as want that ornament of reason,
Are mark'd by folly, wickedness, and shame.

Sir R. I hear you.

Edw. Well, and are you satisfied?

Sir R. I! yes.

Edw. With this! not so, not so am I.
Why should a woman secrets thus conceal,
Pernicious to her husband's peace?

Car. Sir, in all this,
There is not any thing that should affect him.

Edw. Sir, what she says I cannot understand,
Nor should you, Sir, believe, but make her tell.

Sir R. Your husband wills it, and you should obey;
And I, your master, beg: and we are both
Discreet, and worthy confidence from you.

Edw. And we will promise, as she did to Thomas,
Never to speak a word.

Car. Well, Sir, but first
Speak you to Thomas and obtain his leave,
When you have that I will the whole reveal.

Sir R. Well said, well said.

Edw. What! should a wife,
Sir Robert,
Depend on other than her wedded husband?

Car. And may a husband, as his pleasure rules,
Oblige his wife to break the fences down
Of honor, probity, and polish'd life!

Edw. Hear, hear, the obstinate!

Sir R. Come to your room.
Let Edward here alone collect himself,
He loses the respect a master claims,
And what is due, e'en to a wife, forgets.

[*Exeunt Sir Robert and Caroline.*

Edw. And here the toad, with this fine housewifry,
Has only been cajoling. Hang it all—

[*He tosses the linen.*

Ha! what is this? are not my eyes bewitch'd,
A letter, and not yet addressed—from whom?
Devils and demons, what a plot is this!
It is not sign'd, distraction! and in French-
Here, here, in this the secret is contain'd.
O what would I not give that I could read it,
Dolt, dolt that I was, not to have learned French,
Had it been only but to read this letter.
Curse on our schools, and all their Greek and Latin—
They stuff the brain with musty pedantry,
And teach us no one implement of use.
Now here's a paper, scarce a score of lines,
That I would give the Iliad to read.
For if it be a letter to my wife:—
She knows French well. O damn th' intriguing jargon,
To have all here, and not to know one word.
Whose write is it? not Henry's, sure, no—yes!
It is, it is infernal masquerade!

The hand is chang'd, but here and there by chance
The hellish letters show their cloven feet—
Well, well, well, well, I may go feed on grass,
And lay me down with other horn'd and low.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*As before.*

THOMAS.

All, all will out! It is impossible
To keep it longer from his father's knowledge.
What then may happen grieves my heart to think.
Sir Robert loves him dearly; but Sir Robert
Loves his own honor and long-honor'd house.

Enter CAROLINE.

Tho. Caroline.

Car. Leave me, leave me.

Tho. Caroline!

Car. Leave me, I pray—let us not be seen here.

Tho. Do you know that——

Car. I know my misery.

Tho. But only just one word.

Car. I will not now.

Thom. And must I go without?

Car. Yes, instantly.

Tho. Well then I will.

Car. Do, do, for mercy's sake.

[*Exit Thomas.*

Car. How! O the linen is not as I left it!
The letter—Heavens! the letter is away!
Nor on the floor! Who can have taken it?
Edward! oh! I shall sink. I cannot long
Sustain this conflict between love and duty.

Enter Sir Robert.

Sir R. Caroline.

Car. Sir.

Sir R. What have you lost?—what seek you?

Car. Nothing, Sir—Unhappy me!

Sir R. Nay, sure 'tis something.

Car. Thomas must have it—yes, it must be him.

Sir R. What is it that you have so much in mind?
You do not even answer to my question.

Car. O nothing, Sir—a thing indeed worth nothing.

Sir R. If for a trifle, why so much perplex'd.

Car. A little matter pains a wounded heart.
I am beside myself!

[*Exit Caroline.*

Sir R. Alas! poor thing!

Enter Edward.

Edw. Your humble servant, Sir.

Sir R. (*ironically.*) Yours to command.

Edw. I pray you, Sir, let me have my discharge?

Sir R. Discharge!

Edw. Yes, and my wife's, without delay.

Sir R. What! the discharge of both?

Edw. Yes, Sir, of both.
I hope, Sir, you will not refuse me this,
Nor force us to depart disgracefully.

Sir R. You are indeed a young man full of grace,
Grave, temp'rate, prudent, very fit to bear
The jar and jostle of the common world.

Edw. Sir, I am serious, and I will depart.

Sir R. And all this for a headstrong fantasy.

Edw. Pardon me, Sir, for this I have great reason.
I have got proof, Sir—Pray discharge us, Sir.

Sir R. That, Edward, conscience bids me to refuse.

Edw. Servants, 'tis true, we are: but servants, Sir,
Are made of human stuff—not negro slaves.

Sir R. You take my words a little too severely.
If you will go, I, Sir, will not detain you.
But, Edward, think upon the consequence.
I cannot, rash, imprudent boy, but tell you,
That you requite me not as I deserve.
Go where you will, may Heaven tame your passions.
My heart is sorry for you, and your wife—

Edw. She must come with me, Sir.

Sir R. But why is this?
Why will you, Edward, rush thus from your home?

Edw. I cannot tell you—I have not the heart.

Sir R. I do insist to know.

Edw. Then if you will—
I go to save my honor.

Sir R. From my house!
Is not your honor in my house secure?

Edw. No, Sir—oh no!

Sir R. Indeed! What proof have you?

Edw. Read, Sir, that letter.

Sir R. Edward, are you mad?
Call you this dateless, nameless paper, proof?

Edw. Read, read it, Sir, and be convinc'd as I am.

Sir R. It is in French, and to a woman written.

Edw. Is not that proof?

Sir R. Tender and amorous.

Edw. Is not that proof?
Sir R. A very glowing lover.
Edw. O heav'ns! O heav'ns! what say you, Sir, to that?
Sir R. He cannot from his mistress live apart,
And will be privately with her to-night.
Edw. I'll blow his brains out.
Sir R. Whose?
Edw. Your son's.
Sir R. My son's!
Are you distracted, and beyond conviction;
Believe you that I know not Henry's write?
And you too, Sir, should know it quite as well.
Here, take your silly scrawl, and learn to think.
Edw. Look at it well, and you must see the feint.
Are these, Sir, not his cursed characters?
Look at this R—'tis his to ev'ry T!
Sir R. Alack, indeed I much begin to fear.
Edw. And call you not this letter, Sir, a proof?
You know how fondly once he lov'd my wife.—
My wife! my wife! would that she had been his.
This is the secret—Heaven proves the murder.
Here in this paper we have all his heart;
Warm, palpitating, swoln with amorous sighs,
And other tender flatulence. Curse him! curse him!
Are you persuaded, Sir?
Sir R. I am amaz'd.
Caroline! Thomas! Caroline, I say!

Enter CAROLINE.

Car. Sir, your pleasure.
Edw. Hither, Madam, I say.
Why do you keep so guilty-like from us?
I will not murder you. Oh! Caroline!
Sir R. Leave me to speak, and calm your agitation.
(*To Caroline.*) Tell me truly, found you what you lost?
Car. No, Sir.

Sir R. What was it?

Car. Sir, it was a letter.

Edw. The thing is clear. Let the poor woman go.

Car. I know, Sir, that the letter has been found;
And it is fram'd and written, Sir, in terms
That may occasion much distress to me;
For there are those who will not hesitate
To think, to credit, that it was for me.
I cannot clear myself—can but deny—
Nor have I any other proof to show
But my unblemish'd life; which you know well.
That, Sir, should be enough. What can I more
But call the heav'ns to verify the fact.
By all that's holy, great, and everlasting,
That letter in no point pertains to me.
Now I am settled in my constancy.

Edw. Sir, she is guilty. 'Tis the trick of culprits
Still on their first detection to refer
To by-gone innocence.

Car. Slanderous man!
What have the innocent else to advance,
When charg'd with guilt unjustly, as I am?
You are my husband, by my heart preferr'd,
And, I may say, should know my worth by this time.
Never to you have I, before this day,
Denied one pleasure, yea, not one request.
Be you assur'd then, Sir, that for this secret
I have just reasons. If I tell, I injure;
If I refuse, I suffer.—I refuse!—
Say, is this virtue or hypocrisy?

Edw. Neither, neither; it is subtile craft.

Car. Cruel, ungrateful, rash, misjudging Edward!
To you, Sir Robert, let me now appeal.

Sir R. I know you well, and understand you well.
But, Caroline, thus in the face of all

To be so resolute, can I approve?

Car. My husband, Sir, should learn to know me better.

Enter THOMAS.

Edw. Here is the go-between, the confidant.

Sir R. What know you, Thomas, of this letter?

Tho. That?

I gave it to this lady, Sir.

Edw. Curs'd pander!

Tho. Good words, young man.

Sir R. Peace, Edward, let me speak.

Car. I have maintain'd my word in torture, Thomas;

I leave the matter now all to yourself.

Tho. And must I then confess?

Edw. Yes, instantly.

Tho. Man is a creature liable to love;

And love is, as the tuneful poets sing,

An easy lesson to the gentle heart.

Edw. But love like this is guilt, is worse than murder.

Tho. Sure, Master Edward, you are in a passion.

Edw. O blood of Bacchus! I could worry him.

Sir R. Contain yourself; let Thomas take his way.

Tho. Sir, love it was that play'd this prank with me;

Love instigated, counsell'd, and abetted.

Sir R. Then it was you who wrote this fatal letter?

Edw. He cannot, Sir, write French.

Tho. But your wife can;

And could not she prepare a draught for me;

And could not I her composition copy?

Edw. But this is not your write: thus round and full

Is Henry's writing: these are youthful letters,

And, though disguis'd, are his.

Tho. When I was younger I could freer write,

And in this self-same manner as young master;

You know I could, Sir Robert.

Sir R. Very true.

Tho. And it was I who first taught Henry writing.
When he was but a little playing boy,
I gave him lessons; and the pupil still
Retains the traces of his master's care.
Is it not so, Sir Robert?

Sir R. It is indeed.

Edw. But what has this with that false woman's sin?

Sir R. The letter, Edward, then you see is his.

Edw. But why in French? to whom, and why so made?

Tho. The governess of Lord Greenmountain's daughter
Is a most captivating demoiselle.

Sir R. Is she a French woman?

Tho. Alas! she is.

Sir R. Now all is clear; he is in love with her.

Tho. Alack! alack!

Edw. Caroline, for this have—
Are you, Sir Robert, satisfied with this?

Sir R. Yes, certainly; a harmless, simple thing.
I am asham'd so to have meddled in't.

Edw. O Sir! O Sir! if you can credit this.—
Why did you not, Sir, write in English?

Tho. Why?

Edw. Aye why? Do not equivocate—speak out.
Your sweetheart! truelove! knows it well enough.

Tho. Because the French, in tender points of love,
Has softer graces than our barbarous tongue.

Edw. Thou art a knave, or a most simple swain.

Car. And do you still suspect me?

Edw. Yes, I do.
Think you that I can credit such a tale?

Car. Has he said any thing that is not true?

Tho. How, Sir, dare you impeach my truth and honor?

Edw. A gallant lover! But this will not pass.
E'en she, the guilty, smiles to hear you dare me.
Thomas, beware! I'm not the fool you think.

What would I give that you were but a fool,
And all this fable truth! Sir Robert, mark,
This letter is not, as he says, a first—
'Tis not the first disclosure of a flame.

Sir R. True, true indeed, I had forgotten that.

Edw. This is an ancient love, a cherish'd passion;
This is no baby Cupid; no, this love
Has reach'd its puberty. If Caroline
Could pen such hot, licentious stuff as this——
Ah! Mistress Potiphar, did you write this?

Tho. He is distracted, gone beside himself.

Sir R. I am amaz'd, confounded, and perplext.
Can Thomas, ever found so true and faithful,
Prove at his years this cheat? Can Caroline,
That through so much adversity and sorrow
Still bore serene a chaste and noble virtue,
Fall in so short a space thus from herself?
Can Henry too, whose very fault was ever
Th' excess of honor, turn at once so vile!

Edw. O Caroline! O Caroline! how shall I now
Meet the reproaches of my father's eye?
How did I glory once that in thy virtues
I had a refuge, and could see depart
The chance of fortune and the pride of rank.
Was it for this, O Caroline! my wife!
Was it for this you overtopp'd me so,
To make me but the screen of your debasement?

Car. Cease, self-tormentor, I am innocent.

Edw. I ask Sir Robert but for leave to go.

Sir R. Go to the devil. Thomas, come with me.

[*Exeunt Sir Robert and Thomas*

Edw. Yes, I will go—I will go to the devil.
What wretch e'er shot himself for half my reason?
O Caroline! what brought us to this house?
Let us get out of it—out o't we will.

Car. Out of this house!

Edw. Yes, I command it so.
I will be master, and you shall obey.

Car. And must I, shall I, violate my promise?

Edw. Then Thomas lied?

Car. But I recant my purpose.

Edw. Come, let us instantly prepare to go.

Car. Edward, where shall we go?

Edw. Out of this house.

Car. Our home, our only home!

Edw. I am resolv'd.

Car. To leave this house!

Edw. To leave it instantly.
I am a husband, I will have my rights.

Car. Stay then a moment.

Edw. Not a moment more.

[*She goes out, and presently returns with a box.*]

Car. Now I am ready; let us now depart.
O heavens! and must we quit this shelt'ring roof!
This is our trunk—there, satisfy yourself.
How do you mean now to support me, Sir,
To give me food, to find another home?
O you have reason to abuse me thus.
But let us go: let us eat all again;
Let us pawn all; to see who next will save us.
Come, we can beg, we can sing ballads, Edward.
Sing merry songs, while the cold bites our cheeks,
And hungry poverty gnaws at our hearts.
When all is done, I can go forth at night,
The darkness then will hide my raggedness;
And you have courage, that will serve us well.
Come, come, come, to the gallows let us go!

Enter CLODDY.

Clod. Ho, Mistress Caroline.

Edw. What have you there?

Clod. A basket of the prime King-Harry's apples,
Blushing and ripe, like merry maids in May;
And Master Henry pick'd 'em all himself.

Edw. Who sent you with this trash?

Clod. Sent me with trash!

Edw. Who, villain, tell me, sent you with this fruit?

Clod. Why master, sure. O he's a nettle brain! (*aside*)

Edw. Now, Caroline, what can you say to this?

Clod. Poor lad! poor lad! his head's a humming hive.

Edw. Whom were you told to give these apples to?

Clod. To her, just she—'pon honor, no one else.

Car. For your own sake, dear Edward, fly not mad.

Edw. Yes, I am mad. And you, thou grub of dung!
To be the minister of wanton pleasures.
Would that these apples were but cannon ball,
Or even stones. Take that, and that, and that!

[*Throws the apples at Cloddy.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room as before.*

EDWARD and SIR ROBERT.

Edw. I am content, sir, and will still obey you;
But how shall we, through such cabals, discover?—
What other proofs can we expect to find?

Sir R. As yet we have not properly commenc'd.
Here, there, and where our fears in fury drove,
We snatch'd at straws and held them up as proofs.
Let us be calm, this is a serious matter.

Edw. It is indeed, therefore we will be calm,
And set about the scrutiny sedately;
Proceeding step by step till we have reach'd
The inmost chamber of the labyrinth
Where stands the minotaur:—But where's the clue?

Sir R. We must begin with questioning my son.

Edw. He will not tell, he will be like the rest:
We must the guilty sift by stratagem,

Or 'twill, Sir Robert, be but simple work.

Sir R. If he refuse to marry with the widow,
Then may we say that we have got the clue.
But if he will—

Edw. Well?

Sir R. All is right.

Edw. Think you?
Why, sir, a man who loves another's wife,
Will never shy to take a wife himself
To screen his base intrigue—

Sir R. This is too much:
If you think so maliciously of others,
I shall begin to lightly think of you.

Edw. Well, for this time I will be rul'd, Sir Robert:
But how shall we proceed?

Sir R. Here is a letter
Which I have written to transmit by Cloddy;
And mark now, Edward, mark,—how rash you are—
The fruit that Henry sent was for the house,
And came, of course, directed to your wife.

Edw. I do repent me of my violence:
If she be guiltless, what a fool am I!
What have you said? What have you wrote to him?

Sir R. To come to town to me without delay.

Edw. But if the cursed French spoke any truth,
He will be here, and with my wife to night:—
I'll lock her up.

Sir R. Peace, peace, none of these raptures.
Cloddy assures me, when he left the Grange
Henry was in the house.

Edw. [*taking the letter.*] Let Cloddy fly.
But stop, I have a favor to request:—

Sir R. Well, what is it?

Edw. Let me go with the letter.

Sir R. You are so rash, I must not.

Edw. Do, sir, oblige me;
Upon my honor, sir, I will not speak.

Sir R. But where's the need for you to go?

Edw. I'll tell you:
You have requested him to come to town;
He may have business and may not come soon;
But if I go in person with your order,
Then will he think the case of urgency,
And will not fail to come.

Sir R. If I might trust your prudence—

Edw. Doubt me not.

Sir R. Then go, and heaven direct thee right. Poor boy!

[*Exit Sir Robert.*

Edw. [*alone.*] But when I'm gone if Henry come to town
I shall be pander to my own dishonor:
And yet I think he is in town already.
What use had Cloddy for the chariot here?
"To bring the linen, as the wind was high,
"And all the dust astir upon the road!"
Such was his reason, but I am not craz'd,
Nor will the wind be always high, nor rain
Still cease to fall, to lay this blinding dust:—
This reason for the chariot cannot serve.
But here comes Cloddy and I will be calm.

[Enter CLODDY.]

Clod. I am so frighten'd for that whirlwind,
The very sight brings on an ague-fit.
Ah me, his whistling sounds as dismally
As gaffer Winter fifing on the key-hole.

Edw. Good man, pray is the carriage ready?

Clod. No, sir.

Edw. Do have it quickly, for I go with you.

Clod. Sir, Sir—my master, sir, may will his pleasure,
But I will not take you:—no sir,—I can't.

Edw. And why?

Clod. Because—because I wo'nt, not I.
I am a poor man, sir, but English stuff,
And will not, sir, be beaten as a slave.

Edw. Excuse me, friend, 'twas all an accident.
My wife and I had a slight falling-out:—
Are you not married, friend?

Clod. Alack, I am.
But, sir, I never do like you, sir.

Edw. No?
What, never scold your wife?

Clod. From dawn to dark.
O sir, I have a devil of a wife.

Edw. And in your anger make you no mistakes?

Clod. No sir, no, never; for when I have cause,
I bang her soundly and insult no man.

Edw. Well, but the chariot, when will it be ready?

Clod. I am oblig'd to trudge it back on foot.

Edw. On foot! Why so? Ah! why on foot?

Clod. He's kindling.
Because one of the horses is not well.

Edw. How! you did not tell Sir Robert this?

Clod. No sir,
I was afraid to tell.

Edw. Come show me him.

Clod He cannot walk—

Edw. We then must take another.

Clod. But, Sir, I will not go with you.

Edw. Ha friend!

Clod. How? what?

Edw. Come, come, we understand each other,
Mr. Henry is in town.

Clod. In town!

Edw. Ay;
And came with you.

Clod. And came with me!

Edw. With you,
And bade you not to tell.

Clod. Me not to tell!

Edw. And to pretend that you brought only linen,
And how the wind was high—

Clod. The wind was high!
Devils and goblins! how know you all this?

Edw. I am his secretary, don't you know?
And he has written me to warn you well
To mention it to no one.

Clod. I, Sir, mention?
I'd sooner bite through my own speaking tongue:
But will you, Sir, go in the chaise to-night?

Edw. I only said so just to try your prudence;
But I must go to Henry instantly.
Show me the house where you have set him down.

Clod. I must go to the stable first.

Edw. Make haste.

Clod. Try me, as if I were a prating parrot!
No: with a secret I am like an image,
As prudent as a tombstone cherubim.

Exit Cloddy.

Edw. Now what could any husband wish for more?
The sun himself is not more clear than this:
What will Sir Robert now say of his whelp?
I am forsooth a madman, a malicious—
Dissimulation here has serv'd me well;
I will in future only trust myself:—
But here she comes, and I must wear a mask.

[Enter CAROLINE.]

Car. So, Edward, you have business at the Grange?

Edw. I have.

Car. And when do you return.

Edw. To-morrow.

Car. Why not to-night?

Edw. [*aside.*] (Sweet hypocrite,) 'Tis late,
And 'twill be dark before I reach the lodge.

Car. True, and the road is dangerous at night.

Edw. You are con[illegible] my Caroline.
You look, methinks, like one with pleasant hopes.

Car. My heart grows more content.

Edw. [*aside.*] O tender cheat.

Car. O Edward, Edward, if you knew my heart--

Edw. [*aside.*] (I cannot stand this wheedle:) Love, adieu.

Car. Stop, take this hat, 'twill serve you well enough;
We know not yet our destiny.

Edw. Farewell.

[*Exit Edward.*

Car. [*alone.*] His mind is full of something; who could think
A man like this, whose very frame is charg'd
With generous tenderness to an excess,
Could to such wild afflicting freaks give way.

[Enter THOMAS.]

Tho. Ah, well-a-day: Oh what shall next succeed?
Henry is married—married to his Madam!
Here is a note, in which he bids me tell you,
And with this other on his father wait.
He says the marriage will surprise and please you;
That e'en his father will be well content,
And Edward in amaze.

Car. Thank heaven, 'tis done!

Tho. Thank heaven for this!

Car. My heart was almost broken;
I could no longer have sustain'd the conflict.

Tho O selfish woman: and can you rejoice
That such a virtuous, ancient, honor'd, house,
Should by a youthful folly fall so low.

Car. It has not fallen, such a step as marriage

He ne'er would have without due reason ta'en:
But hark—Sir Robert's bell—Give me the note.

[*Exit Caroline.*

Tho. [*alone.*] How could a youth of such a steady humor
Have been bewitch'd into a fault like this!
She can be nothing but a daffodil;
Some hectical illusion of romance;
Her heart a tear, her soul a sigh of woe.
No woman bred with chaste sobriety
Would ere have married on so rash a knowledge,
Wealthy and worthy as he is. Heigh ho!

[Enter HENRY.]

Hen. Ho, Thomas.

Tho. What is this that you have done?

Hen. Why, married.

Tho. Shame, how could you think of that?

Hen. What does my father say?

Tho. What can he say,
But grieve and pine to death.

Hen. Come, come, no more.

Tho. I have but just receiv'd your fatal note,
And Caroline is gone to break his heart.

Hen. And where is Edward?

Tho. Mad, and flown away:
He's to the country gone to murder you.

[Enter CAROLINE.]

Car. Go to your father instantly.

Hen. But first—

Car. Go first to him—I will not hear a word;
Claim pardon where you should; when you have that,
Then I will speak to you—Away, away.

[*Exit Henry.*

It is most strange.

Tho. Why you look pleas'd.

Car. I am.

Tho. Think you Sir Robert will forgive him?

Car. Yes.

Tho. For such a match?

Car. Yes.

Tho. Then 'tis not so bad.

Car. Bad! no: He cannot but be fully pleas'd.

Tho. What will the widow say?

Car. She is content.

Tho. Dear me, dear me, and have we play'd the fool?

Car. All will go well: Where is my Edward now?

Tho. I'll to Sir Robert, and learn all the tale.

[*Exit Thomas.*

Car. [*alone.*] My heart is so enrich'd with happiness
That I can scarcely breathe; and my poor Ned,
How he will rue his vexing jealousy,
And vent his maledictions on the moon
For making him insane. Alas poor Ned!

[Enter HENRY.]

Hen. Now, Caroline, what say you to me now?

Car. A simple wish, the happiness you merit.

Hen. Next to my wife, stand ever in my heart,
And with the name give me a brother's love.
Your virtue and your courage in distress
Charm'd me to admiration; but the love
Which Sylvia rais'd is of a softer kind.
We shall be happier in our different lots:
Who but yourself can manage fiery Ned?

[Enter EDWARD.]

Edw. [*aside.*] Now Troy shall burn again.

Car. Thanks, my dear Henry.

Edw. Dear Henry!

Car. Edward!

Hen. The Devil!

Edw. Yes, yes.

I am a devil—Oh a poor horn'd devil.—
Woman! strumpet! fellow! villain! and I—
Oh what am I?—

Hen. Ah! are you jealous, Edward?

Edw. Sir, instantly prepare: I'm a death's man!
You shall not find me, Sir, a damage monger:
Sir, my divorce shall not be bed and board,
But soul and body: Pistol is my counsel.

Hen. O stop him not, but let us have it all.

Edw. Was ever guilt like her's before so brazen!
Hence, woman, hence! deceitful Caroline!

[Enter SIR ROBERT.]

Sir R. What now?

Edw. Nothing, Sir Robert, nothing, nothing,
Only the old—I am calm now, Sir Robert,
I am a thing for the cuckoo to jeer at.

Car. For heaven and earth, my dearest Edward, cease.

Edw. Woman, dear not me.

Car. O for mercy hear me.

Edw. As I have my hands, Sir Robert, these hands,
I heard her call him—yes, with my own ears,
And in a soft and wooing tender tone,
Dear Henry.

Sir R. Go you away, he will run mad.
Bring your wife to him. Wild, unhappy boy!

[*Exit Henry.*

Car. If you will hear me speak, let me be guilty.

Edw. Hear, she confesses—hear, Sir Robert, hear her.

Car. You swore you lov'd me, Edward, did you not?

Edw. And did I not? O false, perfidious woman!
But I will hear you out.

Sir R. Let her proceed.

Car. How has your love been shown, think well of that.
Love, like its emblem, fire, begets itself,

And, when enkindled in two faithful hearts,
Blends in one flame, and, rising as it burns,
Points to the heav'nly source from whence it came.
But, Edward, Edward, with what furious gusts
Has your tempestuous jealousy beset
Our wedded hearts, and blown awry their flame
From its divine aspiring.

Edw. Caroline.
My days of poem-making now are past,
Fact, truth, plain fact, alone can now content me.

Car. Ah, wilt thou never one sad verse indite;
One elegy on her who did beguile thee?

Edw. O hell and furies!

Sir R. Strange, disorder'd boy—
Take that and blush—come, let him blush alone.

[*Gives him a letter. Exeunt Sir Robert and Caroline.*

Edw. A letter from my father! How can I
Endure the chastisement of his rebuke,
That in such spite, as 'twere, of him and all,
Forc'd this deceiver to become my wife!
Fool that I was, to be so rashly fond,
Not to await his kind paternal counsel—
But let me see what the old Gen'ral says:
"His fortune but his youth"—well I knew that,
"And health his patron—in the Indian climate,
"Heaven now has given him a competence,
"And Sylvia's marriage with rich Malabar."
Curse on her too: one husband has died off,
And she has gone, unknown to every friend,
In search of some fool other—"So he gives"—
What? ha! "two thousand pounds a-year to me,
"And trusts with that and my respected wife."—
O damn her, damn her. I could tear the winds.

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. What, Ned!

Edw. Sylvia here! how, how is this?
And you have heard, and come you to condole?
O Sylvia, Sylvia—

Syl. Edward, are you mad?
Do not you know that I'm a wife again?

Edw. Tis better, yes, I must confess it is,
To marry twice than—

Syl. Edward, have a care—
And know you not then who my husband is?

Edw. How should I know?

Syl. 'Tis Henry.

Edw. Who!

Syl. Your friend

Edw. What Henry? Sylvia, art thou not a vision?

[Enter Sir Robert, Henry, Caroline, and Thomas.]

I fear, I fear, you all have come to laugh—
But how is this?

Syl. I will begin.

Edw. Well do.

Syl. When good Sir Robert there propos'd to me
A marriage with his son, I had not then
Seen Henry, but by chance: he knew me not,
And I was fain that, for myself alone,
Not for my fortune, he should marry me.
For this alone I play'd the mystic part.

Tho. (to Edw.) You see, Sir, she's your own true flesh and blood.

Hen. And when my father spoke of a rich widow,
I thought of course the woman must be old.

Tho. And I thought sure that Sylvia Malabar,
Must needs be one of a fantastic mood,
As no one knew or whence or what she was;
And so by Caroline I did bethink
We might rescue the fam'ly from disgrace,

For she o'er Henry still had powerful sway.

Edw. Thomas, you told a lie about the letter,
That was a shame, you never were in love.

Tho. Nay, Master Edward, by your fury driven,
You little noted what I said to you.

Edw. Well, Caroline! what must I next perform?

Hen. Take the opinion of your counsel, Pistol.

Edw. Laugh at me, mock me, do, I pray you, do.
Scorn me Sir Robert, Sylvia, tear my hair,
As you were wont, though I was innocent,
For mischiefs that the dogs had done your dolls.
My angel Caroline, never again
Shall fiery I to mastership pretend,
But be to thee, thou paragon of wives,
A temp'rate, health-companion ever clear,
Thy own prepar'd, domestic minister.

THE END.

THE FORGERY;

A Drama.

IN FIVE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

DELMORE, whose name was changed in India from Raymond; and who is in love with Alydia.

OLD RAYMOND, an English Merchant, and Grandfather to Delmore.

YOUNG RAYMOND, eldest Brother of Delmore.

SIR ROBERT POSITIVE, a rich general Merchant.

MELVILLE, Agent to Delmore.

PETER HICKUP, } Young Raymond's companions.
GEORGE BUMPER }

ALYDIA, Sir Robert Positive's Niece; in love with Delmore.

LADY POSITIVE, Wife of Sir Robert.

MARTHA BLOOM, a Country Young Lady.

MRS. BLOOM, her Mother.

AMELIA, Servant to Lady Positive.

LUCY, Servant to Martha.

MARY HAWTHORN, a Country Young Woman.

A Clergyman, a Lawyer, Sheriffs, Marshalmen, Country Boy, Sailors, Gaolers, Executioner, Servants, and Watchmen.

THE FORGERY;

A Drama.

ACT I.

SCENE I. A Hall in Sir Robert Positive's house.

Loud knocking at the door several times; at last a Servant of Sir Robert enters.

Serv. WHAT hasty knave can this be at the door,
Who knocks as if he meant to wake the dead?
[*Opens the door,* MELVILLE *enters with a* SAILOR, *who brings a chest.*]

Melv. Pray doth Sir Robert Positive live here?

Serv. Thou hast noised as much as if thou wert
Sir Robert. He doth. What then? Who art thou?

Melv. (to the Sailor.) Here, set down the chest; and return and bring
The other which I show'd to thee on board.

Sail. (as he sets down the chest.) There, shipmate, a rare frigate: if she is
As heavy in her cargo as in metal,
She is a taut prize for thy commodore.

[*Exit Sailor.*

Serv. Here, set down the chest! What art thou? who art thou?

Melv. Is thy master at home? or gentleman
Of the name of Delmore in this proud house?

Serv. Why pray, what do you want with my master?
If you have any message to leave, leave it.
Show me the ticket of the porterage,
And I shall pay the charge if it be right.

Melv. I want to see your master—tell him so,
As I can trust no other with my business.
Here are treasures of great value for him.

Serv. Treasures or no treasures, I shall not now
Trouble my master about them. Leave them.

Melv. But you must though, sir.

Serv. But I will not, sir.

[*First Sailor returns with his messmate, carrying a very large chest.*]

1 *Sail.* Avast, messmate, douse all sails—lower the cargo,
And stow it here, shipmate, in a snug berth.

2 *Sail. (setting down the chest.)* There it is, chuck a-block I warrant you.

Melv. (to the Sailors.) Put it here, my good fellows.
(to the Servant.) Now, great sir,
Go tell your master, sirrah, instantly,
I have a weighty charge to leave with him.

Serv. What is the sum you claim for porterage?

Melv. I want no money, but your master, sir;
Which if you do not instantly inform him,
Myself will take the liberty to do so.

[*Offering to go, but is stopped by the Servant.*

Serv. Thou shalt not though, whilst I wear this liv'ry.

Melv. If you still refuse to tell your master,
Or further thus oppose my seeing him,
I'll give a double trimming to your coat.

[*Melville attempts to force his way.*

1 *Sail.* Bravo! bravo! shipmate. See his honor,
And let him see us too. It's damn'd squally.
Huzza! and stand by for a glass of grog.

(*All endeavouring to pass the Servant, who calls out.*)

Serv. Here John, Bob, William, help! thieves! thieves!

(*Enter more servants, gaily dressed, and a scuffle ensues.*)

1 *Sail.* (*to 1 Servant.*) Avast, avast, thou lubber, or I'll lend
A taut hand to thy bowsprit.

(*Taking him by the nose, and the other two Servants seize Melville.*)

Melv. Renounce thy hold, slave, or I will shake thee
From thy gay attire, and leave you all
Like butterflies in winter. Away, you rogues!

(*Pushing them a great distance from him, where they stand shaking.*)

2 *Sail.* (*triumphantly to the 1 Sailor.*) They are all knock'd up, they cannot stand a squall.

(2 *Sailor seeing Delmore at a distance.*)

Hallo, Jack, here's a strange sial hove in sight;
Douse all, and run under the commodore's lee.

(1 *Sailor leaves hold of the 1 Servant's nose, and places himself behind Melville as Delmore enters.*)

Enter DELMORE, in Eastern attire.

Del. What noise is this? (*seeing Melville.*) Ah, welcome, good Melville.
What's th' matter here? Are the stores disembark'd?
Why all this amazement? What's the matter,
That they all stand like statues? What's the cause?

Melv. That, sir, I will tell you, and thus it is:

Soon as your stores could be conveyed here,
I caus'd them to be brought as you desir'd,
And on my coming to this house, inquir'd
Whether Sir Robert Positive liv'd here.
Yon fellow answered he did, what then?
Ask'd me who I was; and, after such like taunts,
Either unto Sir Robert or to you
He did refuse my message to deliver.
In vain I urg'd that these inclosures did
Contain great treasures, which I could not trust
To any but his master or yourself;
And if he would not you or him inform,
I would myself the freedom take to do so;
And after further speech, and a refusal,
I press'd upon him, and he bawl'd out 'Thieves!'
When in came all this gay and coward tribe,
And seiz'd me like a felon in the house;
Whereat these brave lads and myself oppos'd
Their servile and abus'd authority:—
Now, sir, I have great pleasure to inform you,
Not only these, but likewise all the rest
Of your rich stores are safely got on shore.

Del. Melville, I thank you for your trusty care.
Reward those men, and let them bring the rest.
And so farewell, good Melville.

[*Exeunt Melville and Sailors.*

Now to these.

I'm sorry thus to learn your master hath
Made choice of men who so forget themselves;
However, take you that, (*giving money*) and learn in future
Better to behave—at least to strangers.

[*Servants bow, and exeunt.*

Thus I've restor'd kind quiet in this house,
Where naught but love and gentleness should dwell.

Ah! dear Alydia, for thy blessed sake
I'd cast my treasures all before the winds,
To be blown back from whence I gather'd them.
Though ill it doth befit my native temper
T' reward these men for their impertinence,
Yet——But hold, for yonder comes Sir Robert,
My dearest, safest, casket-keeping friend,
Of that bright jewel, dear Alydia.

[Enter Sir Robert.]

Good-morrow, dear Sir Robert; how art thou?
How thy lady too; and fair Alydia?

Sir R. All well, I thank you; but something like yourself,
With wishes full as they do wish the sails
With kindly winds to waft your coffers here
With all good speed. How are you this morning?

Del. Well in my health, and in my mind most happy,
For, Heaven be prais'd, the other ship which parted
(By the boisterous winds now a month since)
From that I sail'd in, with part of my wealth—
Which I divided, to reduce the hazard
Of the wild winds, and the devouring sea—
Is now within the river safe arriv'd;
And these two chests, Sir Robert, do contain
Some of my rich embarkments from the East,
As diamonds, choicest pearls, and precious silks,
Spices, and costly gums of rarest kind.
These with your good care and disposition
Are to be manag'd, sold, or so exchang'd
As in good time they may converted be
Into a British mansion, fields and flocks,
Fair gardens, grateful shades, with lowing herds
In this blest land, where Freedom holds her court,
Where Kings and Princes only can find shelter
From the rude blasts of the usurper's power,

Whom honor'd trophies cannot satisfy;
But midnight murders and adult'rous insults,
Wide spreading ruin, gratify the tyrant.

Sir R. It is true; for th' hero and the merchant,
The prince, the peasant, indeed all mankind,
Have felt the weight of his malignancy,
Or fear th' extension of his wily power.
The envied wreaths achiev'd in manly battle
Adorn a soldier, are his valor's meed:
Far diff'rent are the crafty tyrant's honors;
He ruins nations under Friendship's mask,
By sneaking treasons, dark deceitfulness:
And makes himself a mark for all brave men
To point and hurl their indignation at.
For this bold England at him throws defiance;
She feels for others' mis'ries as her own,
And in humanity's soft office yields
Protection to the fugitive or King.
Here's no distinction in protective power:
'Tis that which makes our country so rever'd;
For even-handed justice and compassion
Reign ev'ry where in England's happy realm.

Del. It was the dear remembrances of them,
Connected with th' instinctive love of country,
Which caus'd me to resolve to leave the East,
Though half my great possessions I should lose
And honors of high sort by doing so.
But I'm well paid for all such losses now,
Since dear Alydia is to share with me
The gleanings of my fortune's richer harvest.

Sir R. Yes, my dear Delmore, though she is my niece,
Her worth is equal to the honor done her;
For did you fully know how sweet, how sensible,
How rarely modest, true, and good she is,
You'd think her richly worth your treasures left.

Del. Indeed I do, and even ten times o'er
More than the bright dominions of the East.
But come, my friend, allow me to go in,
And with you meet the darling of my soul,
To gain new blessings from her lovely eyes.

Sir R. With pleasure I'll attend you, but—be wise.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Garden.*

Enter DELMORE and ALYDIA.

Alydia wiping away a tear.

Del. What means that tear, that crystal falling drop,
Which, like the morning's silver-tinted dew,
That falls from snowy lilies, pure, perfum'd,
And op'ning roses which glad June displays?
My soul's delight, inform me what it means?

Aly. Perhaps a whim, sir, that my mind permits,
Which I'm not able to explain to you,
Except it be, as I have heard it said,
Sometimes the eye with joy is thus beguil'd;
Mine may perchance be so, for you are near.

Del. O let me chide it from that envy'd spot.—
Hence, thou invidious tear, thy power take,
Nor touch the lilies that adorn my fair,
Soft mingling with the roses on her cheek;
Channel not there, nor course that beauteous track.

Aly. Oh! sir, I ought your compliment chide hence,
Consid'ring it not suitable to me;
But smitten maidens cherish with delight
Love's gentle falsehood breath'd from lips belov'd.

Del. O, Falsehood fled at thy nativity,
Affrighted at his beauteous enemy.

Aly. Good Delmore, if I had not been inform'd
That from the eastern clime you lately came,
And consequently brought some flow'ry growth
Of the rich language which you left behind,
I should suspect your kind sincerity :—
But I must seek out words, if possible,
To pay you back your shining compliments.

Del. If you do so, I pray thee don't forget
Th' unworthy object of thy compliments.
But any words from thee are good, my love,
Being sanctified in passing lips like thine.

Aly. I'm afraid thou hast stopp'd my speaking any :
Yet, can't I leave myself so much thy debtor ;
For thou hast spread the tender buds of fancy
Into the various tinted flowers that charm
In eloquence, like the bright cheerful sun,
Soothing the sense in the thick-blossom'd Spring.
Thus would I say, till I had reach'd the height
And summit of love's compliment and praise :
But, that I feel a prompt opinion here
Which seems to whisper Delmore loves plain truth
Simply-rob'd and free from gaudy trappings :
If thou dost so, I would then frankly tell
My uncle's approbation, to your suit,
Waits, Delmore, now expecting you to ask.

Del. Then thy consent to join that hand so fair
With this unworthy and rude hand of mine
Will make me happier than words can tell.

Aly. That honor, Sir, was not so near my thoughts,
But be it as my uncle and you fix.
And now methinks I seem as doth a youth
Shipp'd, and just bound towards some unknown coast,
All tim'rous, thinking of the enterprise :
'Tis strange too we so many hours have pass'd
And never yet of kindred have convers'd ;
Do let me hear of something in your life

Which I may learn and grow familiar with,
'Twill make me think we have been long acquainted.

Del. Love and all kindred are so center'd here
I scarcely wish now to discover more;
Though I from India came to find my friends—
But I will tell thee how my life was spent,
My days, and hours, and lesser times till this,
Till this blest hour that I now spend with thee:—
Twelve years from that dire inauspicious night
When I was seiz'd, and forc'd on board a vessel
Bound for the sultry climate of the east;—

Aly. What! did you say that you were forc'd from hence?

Del. Yes, my Alydia, most inhumanly;
But wherefore still remains a mystery:
I was at that time but in my twelfth year,
Three out of which I parentless had been,
Under the conduct of my worthy grandsire,
Who to myself and only elder brother
Bestow'd such kindness, and a father's care:
Our loss grew light by his indulgent goodness;
To him in trust was vested for our use
By will, the fortune which my father left,
To be divided into moieties,
On the obtaining each of twenty-one;
With this proviso, that if either died
Before the lapse of his minority,
That then it should revert to the survivor.
My brother, I remember, came of age,
And had possession of one moiety,
Which he in traffic blended with my grandsire,
And us'd his name in merchandise with his:
Here all my knowledge of them separates.

Aly. Thy tale hath stirr'd my curious soul to hear—
Pray thee proceed, I can, alas, foretel

Who caus'd thy cruel and mysterious exile.
What follow'd ?—

Del. Being shipp'd, as I have said,
Ta'en from the tender rearing hand of love,
And heart with softest mercy sweetly form'd,
To hearts and hands of harsh severity.
The friendless pris'ners from their dungeon taken,
Banish'd their country by their country's laws,
Know not the misery which then I knew:
They to each other sadly may complain
To try their griefs to lessen: I alone,
Misery's desponding child, was shut
Close cabin'd, barr'd of all society,
Forbid the golden lamp of day to see,
Till we had reach'd the distant Indian shore.

Aly. My admiration with my pity grows,
And pity weeps to be more sorrowful!
I willingly would bid thee tell no more,
But still more willingly I wish the whole;
To share, though but in fancy and reflection,
Thy hard and wondrous fate.

Del. Thy gentle
Tenderness I'll pay thee back hereafter.

Aly. Proceed—pray thee, proceed—

Del. Thus then, sweet love.
Being arriv'd, as I before have told thee,
I was contracted for, as I soon learnt,
And sold, as 'twere, to gross servility
Unto a lady, primitive, but kind,
Who great possessions had, and retinues,
And, what was greater, had a noble heart.
Her deceas'd husband was a Bramin born,
And she the manners of that sect did follow,
Although 'twas said she was of English birth,
But in her youth imbib'd the Bramin's manners;

Yet not enthusiastically strict
Did she unto their rig'rous tenets lean,
And soon she spoke to me with open bosom,
Calling me little countryman, her child:
Then rose a happy epoch in my life.

Aly. Oh, teach me, heaven! how I shall return
Thy kind appointed guardian, that good soul,
Her justly-bestow'd bounty on my love.
And wherefore didst thou leave her kindnesses?

Del. Because I, to have kept her company,
Had needed wings cherubic, angel-plumage;
But, Providence, instead of those, hath brought
My soul into a midway heav'n of love
To have it fitted for celestial flight:
For know that from the time my kind protectress
Shelter'd me from the bitter frowns of fortune,
The revolutions of the southern winds
Which visit half the year the eastern shore,
Heaving the burning sands up mountains high,
And in dry show'rs with hurricanes descend,
Had not a seventh round quite finished
Ere the grim tyrant shot his cruel shaft,
All icy pointed at good Chiampa's life.

Aly. And how did you survive this new mischance?
Had she no offspring heir to her good heart?

Del. None did survive, or even near akin;
And the prosperity which crowns my days,
My poor deserts forego excessively;
For all her riches and her great extents,
Her whole estate, she did bequeath to me;
With this proviso only, that I'd dwell
(Under the tutorage of two good friends
She had appointed) in that same mansion
Which till her death she had inhabited.

Aly. Strange, wond'rous fate! But wherefore art thou here?

Leaving behind thy wealth and habitation?

Del. Time, dear Alydia (Fortune consenting)
Gave me to raise great riches from great riches.
So much I did increase my wealth by traffic,
Improv'd my own by kind Chiampa's stores,
That in the space of five years from her death
I got those cargoes of rich merchandise
Now disembark'd on England's happy shore,
And which I bring to lay at thy dear feet:
Too poor a compliment, and mean exchange
For that sweet love which I receive from thee!
But now, let's in, and wait Sir Robert's coming,
And to his friendly ear our hearts unfold.

(Delmore taking Alydia by the hand, Exeunt.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Room in Sir Robert's House.*

Enter SIR ROBERT and LADY POSITIVE.

Lady P. It is impossible, impossible, Sir Robert,
For me to bear your taunting spleen unhurt
Without complaint, without resenting it:
I'd have you recollect my birth and family—

Not treat a prelate's daughter, train'd to honor,
Like a base peasant, or a prostitute!—
I will not thus be lower'd in my own,
Or in the estimation of my sex,
With your unkind, your undeserv'd reproaches.

Sir R. Art thou not barren as the desert sand,
Proud as a father Bishop's name can make thee!
Away! and learn thy sex's better powers,
Or I no longer will connect myself
With a disgrace that challenges my manhood;
Diff'rent from age, that clouds the lively wish,
Thy person's youthful, fair, and blossomy,
But fruitless as the tree untimely blighted.

Lady P. Unkind indeed are thy severe remarks;
O had I liv'd in vestal solitude
Under a father's kind protecting shade,
Or sought a needy morsel from the proud,
To but supply what simple nature craves,
Rather than be thus subject still to scorn,
Uneasy nights, and mornings full of sorrow:
But, you, Sir Robert, I shrewdly do suspect
Ne'er lov'd my person as you lov'd my purse,
And now you try to put all blame on me
Who lov'd you for yourself—not for your riches.

Sir R. No more, but leave me, or I truths may tell
Will make you think yourself a prophetess—
Believe that there are other women in the world.

Lady P. Good, my dear lord, nor should you, love, forget
That I may find the world has other men.

(*Exit Lady Positive.*

Sir R. Other men! so:—a bishop's daughter, aye!
And with the same morality I taught her,
Holding defiance with an even hand.
I must confess she nearly hit the mark—

For so far she was right ; I surely did
Allow the golden bait to catch my eye
When Cupid's arrow had not pierc'd my heart--
Yet she has qualities, justice may say,
Which make her dear to me—yes, almost love her,
And oft-times wish her cold sterility
Would kindle into genial fruitfulness.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Street.* (*stage dark.*)

Enter TWO WATCHMEN meeting.

1 *Watch.* Bad weather.

2 *Watch.* Aye, brother.

1 *Watch.* How dost do ?

2 *Watch.* Well.—Good night.

1 *Watch.* Good night.

[*Exeunt different ways.*

[Enter MARTHA BLOOM and LUCY *in veils, pursued by* HICKUP *and* BUMPER—*the former much intoxicated, and the latter not so much so.*]

Hick. By—by all that's pleasant, I will—
Yes, I will—kiss thee. (*Getting hold of Martha.*)
Warm'd by the fiery grape, my girl.

Bump. No, honor—honor is the word, sweet girl :
Thou shalt, thou pretty gipsy, silly slut.

Lucy. Pray, good gentlemen, for heaven's sake leave us :
See my affrighten'd mistress dies with fear !
We are, indeed, two wretched wanderers
Deserving more your pity than your insults ;
Turn'd from our lodging, friendless and forlorn,
To the rigor of this dismal night expos'd,
Unshelter'd from these stormy clouds of Heav'n—
I pray you, beg you, follow us no further.

Hick. Not follow thee ! by the God of love, I will,

And clasp thee thus until the morning wake us.

(Hickup and Bumper use Martha and Lucy roughly, who run off shrieking, the others follow.)

[Enter YOUNG RAYMOND.]

Young R. Sad recollection sobers my mad brain,
Crosses my wish to follow in pursuit,
And sends me home to my unhappy dwelling,
To find the last bad news fatally true. [*Exit.*

[Enter 1st WATCHMAN.]

1 *Watch.* What's the matter, aye— yonder they go.

[Enter 2d WATCHMAN.]

2 *Watch.* Hollow, brother, what met again!—'Tis a bad night.

1 *Watch.* Aye, my old limbs find it so, for cold and wet have nearly numb'd them all— But, hark thee—what doxies are those who shriek and run so fast down the back lane—perhaps they have filch'd from the two drunken flats who follow them. Come, we'll have a Dutch reckoning to-night, for we will share the dust, or see them shopp'd: that, in our calling, is the golden rule, brother—ha, is it not?

2 *Watch.* Aye, aye, it is so, it is so, brother.

1 *Watch.* Come, quick, quick, let's show ourselves on duty. [*Exeunt.*

[Enter MARTHA and LUCY, *who run across the stage crying* help, help, *and* BUMPER *pursuing.*]

[Enter WATCHMEN,—*both crying*]

Thieves, thieves, stop thieves! *(Exit, and soon after re-enters with Delmore, having Bumper in custody, Martha and Lucy attending.)*

Del. The other hath escap'd; but I charge you
That this unmanly wretch be safely kept
Until to-morrow: I'll support the charge.
Good fellows, you have done your duty well—
You have both done credit to your calling.

1 *Watch.* Have we, master? then we will call again—
(Both call) Thieves, thieves! fire and fury, thieves!

Del. I did not mean your calling out at them,
But that you did your business duteously.

2 *Watch.* If so my business is to call again,
For this I know, that calling is my duty.

(calls past ten o'clock; and both go off with Bumper in custody, and as they go)

1 *Watch.* Mind you go home, young women—do you hear?

Mar. O, I'm faint, my Lucy, tir'd too, and hungry—
Thy friendly arm to help me homewards!

(stands in a melancholy posture.)

Del. I did not think that I this night should give
A present to the unhappy of your kind;
But 'tis not in my nature thus to hear
The plaintive voice of misery and sorrow
And keep my purse long pocketed—take this—

(shakes hands with Lucy and gives his purse.)

There, poor forlorns, divide the little there—
It is enough for me to know they want,
To justify my hand and please my heart.

[*Exit.*

Mar. My resolution fails—O surely, surely,
Poor ruin'd Martha never was design'd
To fill the arms of bold impertinence,
And court a drunkard's rudeness to her bosom!
No, no, it must not, shall not, cannot be:
Rather than violate my virgin vows
To the unkind deserter of my love,
I'll beg my wretched bread from door to door,
Or starve, denied all charitable aid.—
Good God! *(nearly fainting.)*

Lucy. My dearest mistress, pray look up!
Behold, the gentle soul who hath now left us

Gave me this purse—for which heav'n shall bless him.

Mar. Where shall we fly for shelter from this storm?

Lucy. To yonder portal, till its force abate.

[*Exeunt Martha and Lucy, Martha leaning on Lucy's arm.*

SCENE III. *Sir Robert's House.*

Enter SIR ROBERT, and AMELIA *his servant.*

Sir R. Well, Amelia, what is this mighty secret?
I always hitherto shap'd my opinion,
In favor of thy honesty and truth
In all domestic matters and concerns:
Does it affect my interest? tell me,
Or mine honor, does it? speak freely without reserve.

Ame. First, Sir Robert, I do humbly thank you
For the opinion you have kindly form'd
Of my poor services which you commended;
And I do think that what I want to say
Will give you pleasure equal to my wish:
For, my dear mistress, whom you oft have blam'd,
(For want of that, perchance, a month may give,)
Is now full eight months gone in pregnancy.

Sir R. Ah! art thou sure of that?—say, Amelia,
How learnt you it?—she would not tell you so!

Ame. Yes, but indeed she did, and mirthfully;
And said she wish'd that you might know it too.

Sir R. Indeed! *(aside)* and did she bid thee tell it me?

Ame. She neither bade me, nor forbade me, Sir;
But finding which way that her mind would go,
I brought it to you with a joyful speed.

Sir R. Leave me, Amelia—yet, stay—ah, devil! *(aside)*

Ame. What, do you ail? have I offended you
By doing that which I thought most would please you?

I will not tell my mistress if you wish't,
Or any one, what I before have told.

Sir R. Amelia, I think that thou art faithful.

Ame. I hope, sir, I ne'er shall wrong your thinking.

Sir R. Yet—No! I cannot stoop so low as make
A servant mistress of her mistress, no— *(aside)*
You may go, Amelia.

(Sir Robert walks about in distress)

Ame. What can this mean?
I thought the news would please him, not afflict.

[*Exit.*

Sir R. By the black furies, I did not think that she
(Though I have deem'd her sterile) was unchaste;
Which, to clear certainty, is now so prov'd:
For ten dull months have coldly pass'd away
Since I familiar was, or bedded with her,
And she now eight months gone in pregnancy.
This is a doubly damn'd discovery!
For she will now retort on me the taunt,
The cursed taunt of disability,
Of stingy nature locking up her pow'r.
And then the infamy which crowns my head
By her detested vile inconstancy,
Which with a rancoring silence I must bear,
Or impotent, or cuckold shall be deem'd,
Gnaws deeply on my heart, distracts my soul,
And sets the pow'rful engine of the mind
Active, to work destruction and revenge.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *A Garden and Moonlight.*

Young R. Why what a slave is man when he is thus
By wickedness, weakness, mischance, or loss,

Reduc'd as I am! Ev'n the hot potent wine,
Whose power only but a short time since
Flatter'd my brain, is vapor'd all in air,
And sober, sad reflection now succeeds!
Here too comes one to tell the last disaster.

[Enter Old Raymond.]

Then, sir, 'tis certain our last ship is lost.

Old R. It is by several accounts confirm'd.

Young R. Then too as certain it confirms our ruin.
This, added to our many recent losses,
Which put our credit in a doubtful scale,
Now doth the balance cast for certainty.
Heavy misfortune weighs up parting hope.

Old R. No; though misfortune clouds the present hour,
And all surrounds us with a threatening storm,
The gloom is not so dark and full of horror
To rob my bosom, frighten Hope away,
Who here sits ready to confront Despair,
Finding a spark to cheer the lab'ring heart.
When the hoarse thunder sweeps th' ethereal plain,
And darts forth lightning 'midst descending showers,
Its forked brightness stabs the angry gloom,
Assuring as it flares a clear sereno,
A bright disclosure of the heavens again.

Young R. Oh! all fair prospects now have left my view.
Why should we now anew build airy castles,
While thus entangled in the old one's ruin?

Old R. True hope will soon erect more lasting towers,
So strong that nought but guilt will ever shake them.
The sanguine murd'rer who in jealous rage
His brother kill'd, e'en he despair'd unjustly,
And on himself did double the offence.

Young R. Oh! sir—I beg, no more.

Old R. Yes, a few words.
Can innocence like thine droop and despond,

As if in love with knotty-brow'd despair?
For shame! From earth thy moisten'd eyes lift up,
And view the glorious canopy of heaven
All spangled with the glitt'ring gems of night;
Then think how that great jeweller of them,
As he this wondrous creation did
Out of mere chaos bring in bounty forth,
May all our loss a thousand-fold redeem.
The thought shall be as the bright wings of Hope
Flying with Faith to heavenly rest.

[*Exit Old Raymond.*

Young R. He's gone!
And sadly pleas'd I am to be so left.
I felt a tumult gath'ring in my breast,
And at his words the flame of guilt burst out,
And I almost betray'd its secret source.
" A brother kill'd, and he despair'd unjustly,
" And on himself did double the offence."
These were the words the good old man did use,
And I in mis'ry's book may well record them,
For something here tells me they will be wanted!
Amidst the gay delights of prosp'rous days
I almost had forgot my brother's death,
Caus'd by my tongue, more fell than Cain's hand;
For I deliberately did bid his death,
And for a lesser reason—avarice!
For glittering gold, not envy, I have murder'd,
Which now most justly I have lost again,
And only woe is left me in its stead;
But being done, the deed with him must rest,
And powerful conscience, that doth cherish pains,
I must resist, and all her ghastly shadows.

[*Exit.*

SCENE V. *A Hall.*

Enter Sir Robert and Old Raymond.

Sir R. What sorrow, good old man, doth thus intrude
Within this mansion of philosophy?
For thou wert wont to chide away complaint
By reasoning on its impropriety.

Old R. Yes, yes, Sir Robert, I am well aware
That man should not complain of that which is,
Though it doth cause much sorrow to the heart.
Here Grief hath held her court for many a year;
From these old fountains too her power oft flow'd,
But now they are but dry receptacles.
Yes, recent losses have the channels stopp'd
Which us'd to ease th' oppressions of my heart;
And these grey hairs soon to a peaceful rest
Will presently retire, with all my woes!

Sir R. Grief bears so pressingly upon you, sir,
Inquiry would perhaps but probe the wound,
Leaving the cure still unadminister'd,
Or I would ask this rude inquietude,
What bus'ness Fortune's daughter hath with thee
That she so long doth keep thee company.
I rather choose to guess the mournful cause
Than give you the affliction to disclose it.

Old R. You are very kind, very kind, good sir,
And I would your desire now satisfy
As to the various griefs which visit me,
But here's a catalogue within so full——
My poor boy first, and mixing with the rest,
Each lot being mingled with a share for him,
Would draw a fountain from a stony rock.

Sir R. Then guessing only shall desire suffice:

But I must join with you on sorrow's theme,
By which alleviation may be found
In my unfolding and a friend's condolement,
Though mine hangs stubborn on my memory;
Not that the object of complaint is such,
But in another, for the self-same thing,
Might prove so trifling, and of little note,
A few swift hours would find a grave for it.

Old R. Tell me then what it is, for mis'ry's book
(Each page containing some account of mine)
Will lead me by the index of my heart
To pair thy rude corrosive evil there;
And, as condolement doth consist of words,
We'll cheat our griefs in speaking of them so
That we perhaps may lessen their effects.
Oh that on balancing the whole account
We could destroy the first existing sum.

Sir R. Your venerable aspect chides me, sir,
In the suggesting to myself a wish
To burthen you with an injunction
Such as my story's secrecy requires.
With confidence I therefore will impart it,
Convey my thoughts in friendship's open style,
Though my tongue prove my own shame's orator.
But that your long-respected kindnesses,
And faithful, ancient friendship with my father,
Assure me of the worth of him I trust,
I should reluctantly unfold my story.

Old R. You do awake in my remembrance
Some cheerful hours in friendship sweetly spent.
With that brave man, thy good and noble father.
He was indeed of friendship's self compos'd,
For in him center'd all her gentleness;
The thought of whom amidst my gloomy woes
Lifts up my mind a retrospect to take

Of happier times than these which I now know,
When fortune on affection ever smil'd,
And blest us with reciprocal content.

Sir R. He was indeed the figure of thy words,
And, as a poor epitome of him,
The whole of my mishap I will relate,
Though shame afflict me in the telling it.

Old R. What shame dares stain the story of the son
Of my old friend? Begin, I pray you, sir,
And let me be acquainted with the cause.

Sir R. Thus then in short I will premise to thee:
In my evening walk, 'bout eight months since,
I met a maid, and soft accosted her.
She spake me fair, and in appearance gentle,
Blooming simplicity in every look.
I did request, nay, urg'd more conversation,
But she de-fan'd my importunity;
Yet, after begging for another meeting,
She did consent, if I would leave her then,
To meet me in the evening again;
The time and place then fix'd——

Old R. You doubtless met her.

Sir R. Yes, sir, I did; and such was my mishap,
Know, on the moment, 'midst a gloomy walk,
When we did meet, a strange foot did approach us.
I whisper'd softly, we had best retire
Into the dark recesses of the wood
T' avoid being seen: she gently acquiesc'd,
Drawing her handkerchief o'er her sweet face;
When a dark cloud, in compliment to love,
Swam timely o'er the silv'ry globe of night;
And in a bow'r, made sweet with woodbines fresh
Encircling closely with the curling vine,
A mossy bank we found, and sat us down.

Old. R. Is this the cause which so disquiets thee?

Sir R. This the foundation of inquietude.
For I, taking that day unto an artist
A pair of bracelets of domestic note,
Which in my family had been, 'twas said,
In estimation near two centuries,
The curious workmanship which made them up
Still made me on them a great value set;
And for that on one part was affix'd,
In small, a well drawn likeness of my father;
And on the other, in like manner too,
My mother's gentle likeness did appear;
Which, though antiquity did not attend them
Equal unto the other parts thereof,
Were in my mind of equal valuation.
The reason for my taking them with me
Was a small injury to have repair'd,
Alydia, my niece, had pointed out
That time or other cause occasioned.
I purpos'd to bestow them upon her
Whenever she should wed deservingly.
These I by negligence in that same bow'r
Did leave, or they were by the stranger taken,
But which I cannot say, and heed it not:
For knowing they are gone is more to me
Than knowing which way from me they did go.
Inquiry too had only led to shame me;
So I have rather borne the loss, though great,
Than risk my reputation to retrieve it.

Old R. Thereby you've done yourself a dear-bought justice,
Though in your choice you have been fortunate:
For when two evils do present themselves,
It is most just to choose the least of them.
But let us leave this more frequented place
And to you walk, and say what we may think;

For if the bracelets are redeemable,
I will myself do much to help you to them.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Room in Sir Robert's House.*

Enter Sir Robert and Old Raymond.

Sir R. I am glad of this. Yes, Delmore, your kindness
To this poor and good old man much pleases me.
Alydia too shall thank you for your goodness;
She whose soft soul always enraptur'd is
On hearing of or doing a kind act.
It joys me much to think you've found such friend.
Five thousand pounds, I think, you said he would
Advance, to aid you in your present need:
And for securing to him the repayment,
He had propos'd to take your simple bond.

Old R. Yes, Sir Robert, 'twas his offer to me,
And kindly offer'd ere I ask'd the loan
Or had unfolded my distress to him;
But which he seem'd to be acquainted with
From some good friend; may I believe it, you?

Sir R. I hinted to him, when I saw you last,

(For he came in the instant we were parting,)
On his inquiring who you were, and why
Grief hung so heavy on your aged face,
That you had met with many and great losses,
As well by hazarding in merchandize,
As in an amiable and much-lov'd grandson,
Who in his early youth was strangely lost.
He started when I mention'd the last cause;
Then, lost in sympathy, he dropt a tear,
Just as a parent's eye, for such a loss
O'ercharg'd with silent grief, had sadly shed.

Old R. Oh! sir, I love him better for his mind
Than for his gold which he will lend to me.
A golden deed may meanly be perform'd,
One of less glitter nobly may be done;
But here the sun-shine of benevolence
Is bright in worth and in performance too.
He felt for my great losses, did he, sir?

Sir R. Indeed he did, and felt too like a man
Who in Misfortune's school had learn'd to feel.
He surely is a most kind noble youth.
But hold, he's here, and his lawyer with him.
If you think fit, I'll leave you here with them.

Old R. By no means, Sir Robert; I beg you stop,
And put your name unto the bond they bring,
To witness his kind act, my obligation.

[Enter DELMORE and LAWYER.]

Del. I have to ask your pardon, dear Sir Robert,
In making thus so free within your house;
But coming on a bus'ness that will please you,
I hope will plead excuse for my offending,
Or I'll withdraw until your better leisure.

Sir R. I know your bus'ness, and rejoice to see you.
It is to serve a man of great desert.

Del. No matter; 'tis a stingy act indeed

That's not rewarded in the doing o't.
I hither came, sir, to perform my promise. *(to Old Ray.)*
Here, you will find a check for the amount
Which I propos'd to lend—accept it, Sir.

Old R. I know no words my feelings to express,
But thanks to you, and gratitude to heav'n,
For raising such a friend at such a time.
O may that gracious pow'r kindly pour down
Blessings when most you need them on your head,
Rich as your goodness, great as it to me.

Law. This is the bond—the penalty is double;
But, the condition, for five thousand pounds,
In manner payable as there express'd.

(Old Raymond reads.)

Old R. Know all men by these presents, that I, Benjamin Raymond, of the city of London, Merchant, am held, and firmly bound, to Benjamin Raymond the younger, son of Thomas Raymond, (ah! Thomas Raymond!) late of the said city, merchant, deceased, in ten thousand pounds—
Benjamin Raymond the younger, of———

(looks steadfastly at Delmore, and lets the bond fall.)

Oh gracious Heaven! It is my boy himself!
It is my lost, my found, my dearest boy!

(runs into his arms.)

Del. Yes, my kind grandsire, and no longer Delmore,
But Raymond now; your more than happy grandson,
Who with much labor did discover you
But yesterday to be alive and poor;
That fortune long had turn'd her back upon you.
Then straight I flew to aid you as I should,
And thought the gentle means which I did choose
Might please your eye and cheer your heart together.

Old R. Am I awake, or in a dream of bliss
Too exquisite to be substantial?
Hold me a moment in thy loving arms,

And let me gaze again upon thy face,
That I may thus be sure it is my boy—
'Tis he, 'tis he himself, and I am happy!
Grown into comely manhood: but 'tis he!
Oh tell me all—where, and how thou hast been;
Who sent thee hence; who brought thee home again
Unfold the riddle of thy life, at once,
I am impatient and would know all now.

Del. The present hour can know no other thoughts
But those of you and dear Alydia,
To whom I'll carry the sweet tidings straight
And make her happy in a grandsire found:
We then shall meet—indulge me till I tell her.

[*Exeunt Delmore and Lawyer.*

Old R. Farewell, good lad—but what can be his haste?

Sir R. I'll tell you that hereafter; but at present
I am within the mazes of surprise
Almost lost!—What! is it possible!
Can this be your long-lost lamented child!

Old R. It is, it is! Now, dear Sir Robert, first
I'll thank my God, then see my other boy;
Tell him how good he hath been unto us,
And cheer his heart with this kind change of fortune.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Room.*

Enter YOUNG RAYMOND.

Young R. In vain, from scene to scene, and place to place,
To ease my heart and to amuse my mind,
I fly, for woe incessantly pursues
And feeds the dreadful tumult of my soul.

Sure I am wedded to eternal pain!
And, but last night, too, in the public streets,
By vile intoxication just made mad,
To use unmanly insults to the wretched!
And thus to do one more unworthy act,
By trying to shake off the thoughts of others.
I seem as doth the helpless mariner,
Within a wide engrossing whirlpool caught,
How could I first destroy my peace for gold?
Ah avarice! thou tempting subtil fiend!
I feel too late thy smiles, deceitful pow'r,
And promises as guileful as thy smiles;
Who, like a thief in night's dark robe attir'd,
Caught the advantage while I gaily dream'd,
And stole my precious jewel, peace, away,
My brother! oh my brother! righteous heaven!
Oh! whether, whether——

(stands in a disconsolate posture.)

[Enter OLD RAYMOND.]

Old R. Just as I thought—
Alone, poor boy, desponding, and in tears—
Grieving his brother and his fortune lost:
Well, breathe out the oppression of thy heart—
Make room for joy which with my errand comes:—
He sees me not.—Well, my good boy—

Young R. Alas!

Old R. Come, you must not indulge your sorrow thus!
Consider that the blessings of abundance
Which in rich purple tides of bounty flow'd
Were merely loans intrusted for good use.
Is it but justice to the lender, then,
On his request to yield them back again?
Come, come, why do you thus dejected muse
As you would shut your ear against my speech?

Young R. I beg your pardon, Sir, my rude—

Old R. No ceremony, boy,
It hath in me lost half its consequence,
The other half I now must cast aside,
And plainly tell thee that I hither came—
Yes, to dissolve thy grief with words of joy,
And chase all sorrow from thy lab'ring heart;
And hope I come not vainly for that purpose.

Young R. Joy and my heart strangers long since have been.

Old R. This is the time they should then be acquainted:
For know, a noble youth new from the east
Five thousand pounds will lend me on my bond,
Which will be ample to recruit our stock,
Bring back our credit to its wonted state,
And cheerfulness and comfort to our hearts.

Young R. Five thousand pounds, said you! pray, sir, from whom?
What noble youth? how did he know our wants?
Who made them known? what led him to assist us?

Old R. His rich stores of merchandize were all consign'd
Unto Sir Robert Positive, whose father was
In early days my friend, most intimate;
And since our heavy losses press'd us down,
You know his friendly hand sometimes hath help'd us.
'Twas he who told how much we needed aid,
And caus'd this unexpected kindness to us.
Come, then, what do you say? unfold your arms!
Why on thy brow sits gloomy sullenness
Thus frowning on the cheerful smiles of heav'n?
Our faces should in dawning joys be dress'd,
Our hearts, with gladness and with gratitude:
Think but how graciously hath heav'n, even now,
Unworthy as we are, rais'd up a friend
To mar adversity's dread threat'ning stroke
And send us soft prosperity again.

Then cast away these dark engender'd looks,
Like offsprings of detestable despair,
The brood of evil deeds, and conscience foul;
Such, my dear child, as thou hast never known.

Young R. Did, Sir, your words impart that wish'd-for truth,
My dismal thoughts and sullen-knotted brow
Might vanish, but indeed they do not.

Old R. I must be happy, or must be ungrateful,
And in that thou should'st keep me company.

Young R. It cheers my heart to think you are so happy,
And what in kindness my good grandsire brings,
If not with joy, shall be receiv'd with thanks;
And for the cares and kind indulgences
My youth and growing age have both experienc'd,
I'm ever bound to thank and honor you.
But at this time I am so ill at ease
That what you tell, alas, but comes to me
As a physician visiting the dead.

Old R. Why so, I pray thee? It was, indeed, almost
For thee alone I did accept the favor;
Thought it might serve thee when I am no more:
Short is the service it can do to me—
My grey-hair'd head submissively awaits
The grisly tyrant's life-destroying stroke,
Which, too, misfortune may in her next visit
Bring to my heart and send me to the grave.

Young R. Alas, kind Sir! my soul is overburthen'd,
And happiness to me is quite forbidden.
Let me unload my heart and tell you all
The horrid crimes I have been guilty of,
And your advice perhaps may give relief:
But there's no cure for my diseased soul!—
Oh horror! my brother—

Old R. No, my good boy,

I do not wish at this time to hear more,
Or, indeed, more to say, but only this:
That you have magnified your little faults:
'Tis true, you doubted the great pow'r of heav'n,
To raise us up from mis'ry and misfortune;
Which was a crime, a very great one, too:
But thy repentant heart feeling its fault,
Will find forgiveness on the asking it:
So I will leave thee now, kneel down and pray.

[*Exit Old Raymond.*

Young R. He thinks not, knows not, nor can he believe
The hopeless task he left me to perform;
But I'll once more retire and try to do it.

[*Exit.*

SCENE I. *A Room in Sir Robert's House.*

SIR ROBERT *enters thoughtfully, starts, and rings a bell.*

[SERVANT *enters.*]

Sir R. Thy mistress—I want her.

Ser. I'll tell her so, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Sir R. Now, Rage, thy empire hold most absolute!
Black furies now support thee on thy throne,
Till pow'rful ire shall bear thee high as heav'n,
And from thence falling on her harlot head,
Like as a fireball 'midst a gloomy show'r,
Alarm in horror her affrighten'd soul,
So drive her trembling from my sight for ever!

[Enter LADY POSITIVE.]

Lady P. What is your will, Sir Robert?

Sir R. To freeze your soul in sharp and icy horror,
And with hot blushes burn thy harlot's face.

Lady P. What means all this? pray, Sir, be reconcil'd.

Sir R. Reconcil'd to what? Reconcil'd! said'st thou?

Lady P. Yes, Sir, that was the word that I did use,
And must intreat the word's effect be granted:
Consider how the world will censure us.

Sir R. What means the strumpet!—yet I am calm.—
How, mistress! would'st make an accomplice of me?

Lady P. Sir, I would; and then——

Sir R. Out of my sight!
I'll hear no more; no more attempt to speak,
Or by the vengeance of my injur'd honor,
This sword shall put a period to thy speech.

Lady P. Be calm, I do beseech you, Sir, a moment;
My fault is magnified by your displeasure,
And rage triumphant tramples reason down:
I can, nay will, unfold the whole affair
Which caus'd this great and strange confusion.
Although I lov'd a paramour in private—

Sir R. No more! Away! I'll hear no more—stand by!
Death shall arrest thy next attempt to speak.

Lady P. Alas! sir, then you must not leave me thus—

Sir R. Stand off, and let me pass, thou wretched thing;
For to my sight thou art as hateful grown
As hell's severest tortures to my thoughts.

(she takes hold of his arm.)

Begone! I say, leave thy hold or—

(attempts to draw his sword.)

Lady P. If you will not hear, beseech you to receive
And exercise your better sense of sight.

(giving him a pair of bracelets.)

Sir R. Where got you these, madam?

Lady P. Do you not know with whom you left them, Sir?

Sir R. Yes, I do, Madam, and to gall thy soul,
Know, to a secret mistress they were given.

Lady P. What, Sir!—'tis very well, 'tis very well—

Sir R. Are you not satisfied?—O curses on thee!
Lady P. Yes, Sir, indeed I am—ah, ah, ah:
"For to my sight you are as hateful grown
"As hell's severest tortures to my thoughts!"
This incoherence, Sir, doth make me laugh;
To think thy vulgar spleen and lofty praise
On the same object must be reconcil'd.
Was it the dress that did so charm you, Sir?
Or the dumb signs by which you were conducted
Into the gloomy harbour of the wood,
Not nine months since, when humble cottagers
Were from their daily toils to rest retir'd
In humble innocent security?
Was this fine ring—a love-token bestow'd,
With strong injunction not to part with it
Till you should meet again? That being done,
There is the ring—remember what time's gone.

[*Exit.*

Sir R. By heav'n, I know not what to make of this!
Whether to laugh with her, or angry be:
For I remember an appointment made
By me, and that 'bout eight months since, to meet
The daughter of a neighbouring cottager,
(Fresh as the morning when I first did meet her,)
And which most punctually I did keep,
But never could I find her out again.
And then I lost these bracelets—gave this ring,
For promises to meet the evening after:
But the appointment was not kept by her,
As I suppose, for fear of a detection,
As she possession of the bracelets got;
And yet my Lady spoke as'twere herself,
If intimations may be fairly taken:
And yet it could not—never could be her!
She hath been cozening with the village girl.

Whom accident hath thrown into her way,
To teaze me with this strange discovery.

[Enter A SERVANT, *with a letter.*]

Sir R. What want you, ha?

Ser. To deliver this, Sir.

[*delivers a letter and exit.*

[*Sir Robert, reads the letter.*]

"Sir, I wish to see you alone, any time this day, to let "you know something that you will be pleased to hear, if "your honor think proper to see your humble servant

"Mary Hawthorn."

[*Sir Robert rings a bell and a servant enters.*]

Who brought this letter?

Ser. A country boy, Sir.

Sir R. Send him to me.

Ser. I will, Sir Robert.

[*Exit.*

[Enter SERVANT and COUNTRY-BOY.]

[*Servant exit.*

Sir R. Where did'st thou bring this letter from, my lad?

C.-Boy. From my sister Hawthorn, sir, who last Sunday married John Hawthorn, of your honor's parish, and lives near your honor's great house, cross the common, by the three walnut-trees, but is now here in London, at her cousin's.

Sir R. Tell her to call upon me, presently.

C.-Boy. Yes, your honor.—Lord, Lord, what a fine house! [*Exit.*

Sir R. I do appear as if but half awake!
What other secrets are to be disclos'd?

[*Exit.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Sir Robert's House.*

Enter DELMORE and ALYDIA.

Del. It is, indeed, most strange and wonderful;
But it is certain that my grandfather lives:
And hadst thou seen him as he gaz'd on me
In pleas'd amazement—how he speechless stood,
Thou surely would'st have bless'd our gentle stars,
For the kind acquisition of his love.

Aly. But wherefore did you alter your true name?—
Yet, 'tis no matter to me now to know,
Though I should chide for your deceiving me;
Yet I'll not do so:—If for other cause
In future time I needs must chide my love,
I'll do it, by the name of Delmore then,
And keep his truer name to love him by.

Del. Thou art all goodness: but I can explain,
And will, to thy full satisfaction, too,
Why I by name of Delmore have been call'd.
It is the custom with the Indian tribe,
'Mongst whom my ample fortune took its rise,
That to enjoy the ancient rights, bequeath'd
By will, or given by deed, unto a stranger,
He first must take the donor's name himself,
And then the rights do follow with the deed.

Aly. 'Tis well; I know thy honor and thy truth
No garnishment or falsehood would admit.
But, my dear Delmore, (so I still must call thee,)
Didst thou remind Sir Robert that at ten

O'clock this morning we meant to meet at church:

Del. I did so; but he needed not be told,
He knew my anxious love, my ardent wishes,
He will attend us at the appointed time.—
Oh! great reward for all my troubles past!
Good heav'n's kind bounty now is near complete.
Oh! dear Alydia! how my fond soul melts,
My bosom burns with love by looking on thee!
Ah! fly with lightning's speed, ye hours, away
'Till the wish'd time arrives.

[Enter a SERVANT, *who presents a letter.*]

Serv. The messenger who brought that letter, Sir,
Desires to speak with you on its contents.

Del. Very well; let him wait without, I'll see him.

[*Exit Servant.*

Aly. I'll leave thee then, but do not long be absent;
For I'm as silly as a little child
Left by its mother for a moment's time,
Impatient for her cheering smile's return.

Del. I will, my sweet, with speed return to thee,
And draw fresh blessings from thy lovely eyes.—
Adieu, my love, my dear Alydia! (*they embrace*)

Aly Farewell! adieu! until we meet again!

[*Exeunt different ways.*

SCENE II. *Another Room in Sir Robert's House*

Enter SIR ROBERT, *solus.*

Sir R. I know not what to think, to say, or do,
In this affair; for all seems mystery:—
But who comes here?

[Enter LADY POSITIVE and MARY HAWTHORN.]

Lady P. I beg to introduce
To you, Sir, in this—

Sir R. By heav'n, it is the same!
The very she who took the bracelets from me. *(aside)*
What is't, my girl, that thou want'st here, ha! speak!

Mary. You did not speak so angrily to me, Sir,
When you did meet me in the cowslip field;
But 'tis long since, perhaps you have forgot me.

Sir R. (aside) Death and the devil—she remembers me!

Lady P. How piteously confused he doth appear—
How much the dignity of man is lost!
I must unshackle his embarrassment. *(aside)*
Sir Robert!—

[Enter a SERVANT.]

Serv. Madam, the milliner attends your leisure.

Lady P. 'Tis well. *(Servant exit.)* I'll leave him, she will tell the rest.
Good morning, chaste, good Sir Robert Positive.

[*Exit Lady Positive.*

Sir R. Faith, she is gone; and glad enough I am.
But what am I to do with this?—I know not. *(aside)*
What brought you here, girl? answer me!

Mary. 'Twas your appointment, Sir, I do assure you,
And not the first that you have made with me.

Sir R. How came you here? and wherefore did you come?

Mary. I came upon my feet, and came to tell you—

Sir R. To tell me what?

Mary. A secret, if you please, Sir.

Sir R. What secret, girl, hast thou to tell to me?

Mary. Lord, Sir—I know not how to tell you what.

Sir R. Plague of the wench, 'tis pain to ask her questions;
Yet I must know what she hath got to say. *(aside)*
I do desire you tell me wherefore you came here.

Mary. To tell you plain—as plain as I dare tell,
What about eight months since then happened:

When you did meet me in the cowslip field,
And leaning on the stile, (the lambs then playing)
You talking gentle as their merriment,
I listen'd to your speech attentively;
Which to me you did use as kind as may be:
And bade me promise, Sir, to meet you there,
In the same ev'ning of that sunny day,
And I did promise: (for you made me do so)
But I thought fit to let your lady know,
That she might have her due, I losing nothing;
So that in pleasing both, I might be pleas'd.

Sir R. Did my lady, on that evening, meet me?

Mary. She did; and habited like me she came,
With handkerchief thrown loosely round her hat;
'Twas just like this which you, sir, gave to me
(shewing a handkerchief.)
On that same day to wear about my head,
So you might know me in the evening gloom:
I was a witness to the meeting, sir,
As was my sweetheart, young John Hawthorn, too;
At whose unwish'd-for steps both of you fled
Into the wood, and there the clouded moon
Did darkly close our eyes' pursuit of you.

Sir R. By heav'n, it was most certainly my wife!
Is't possible I could be so deceiv'd?—
Yet every thing confirms that it was so.
Another pretty secret, on my soul! *(aside)*
Well, get thee home, and in the morning early,
You and John Hawthorn call upon me here;
And till then thou'lt close thy lips on knowledge
Of what thou hast heard or seen respecting that
Which thou cam'st here thus to unfold to me.

Mary. I will obey your honor's order straight.
[*Mary exit.*

Sir R. Well, well, this news, though strange, revives my soul,

And draws it from the rock 'twas near to split on.
The dismal mist is from my sight dispell'd,
And prospects wide and charming now appear.
What! my wife chaste! Blest with hope of offspring too!
But I must chide her for her so cozening me.

[Lady Positive enters.]

And yet I'll love her, dearly love her for't.

(Lady Positive presents herself kneeling.)

Lady P. Wilt thou indeed! then all is well again.
And chide me now in humble posture, fit
For kind correction after an offence.

Sir R. What, do I see my Leonora here!
And can she tenderly forgive her wrongs?
Rise to my arms, *(raises her)* and let me bless thee thus;
And next praise Heaven for the delighting pledge,
The joyful promise of an offspring from thee.
Ah! Leonora, did thy sex but know
What conquests they might make with gentle arts,
What captives their kind looks could make of men,
They would, like thee, create most pleasing bondage;
Such prisoners with their captors would be blest.

[Enter a Servant.]

Serv. Old Mr. Raymond, sir, bade me say he'll wait,
If you can give him leisure for a moment.

Lady P. I'll leave you then, Sir Robert; it may be
He hath some business of importance with you.

Sir R. Thy wishes be thy guide. Adieu, adieu.

(she exit.

Desire Mr. Raymond to come in to me.

(Servant exit.

[Enter Old Raymond.]

Old R. Alas! sir, the heaviest news my heart e'er bore,
And which my tongue almost refuses utterance!
Oh! my unhappy grandson! How shall I—
How can I tell you? He hath committed—

Sir R. What?

Old R. A forgery!

I've just receiv'd this wretched letter from him.

Sir R. What hath he forged? Look up, my good old friend.

I am sorry for it. On whom? and when?

Old R. Look there! look there!

Sir R. Do you know the person whose name he us'd?

Is the draft paid, or was it stopp'd when offer'd?

Old R. I think it was not paid; for he saith there

He hath no money. Oh! sad heavy day!

I could have borne the pains of meagre want,

I could have borne the wants of health and ease,

I could have borne the loss e'en of my all,

With patience bending to the will of Heaven;

But oh! this dreadful loss of him and honor

Impels me on to madness and despair!

Oh! 'twill kill his brother—break his kind heart!

Sir R. Come, my good friend, bear up awhile. I'll go

And gently as I can, with thy assistance,

Make known the horrid deed unto his brother,

Try to alleviate our suffering feelings

By our united strength and sympathy.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Martha's Lodgings.*

Enter MARTHA and LUCY with a Letter.

Mar. From whom, Lucy, can this letter have come

Which the woman here has just deliver'd?

Happy am I to think I have discharg'd

Her hard and high demand for lodging us,

Which accident did put into my pow'r,

Out of the money which that generous man

So generously, so kindly did bestow
On us, wretched and poor, strangers to him.
Can it be from the perfidious Raymond?
O no! 'tis surely my dear father's hand,
An answer to the one I sent my mother.

(opens the letter.)

Why it is dated, Lucy, ten days back!

(reads the letter.

"Your letter to your mother I took care should not
"reach her; and you may spare yourself the trouble of
"sending any more, for she shall not receive or I answer
"any letter from you hereafter, though grief burst my bo-
"som. Deceitful, wicked, and disgraceful strumpet!
"And, for your further comfort, know that my house and
"purse shall be for ever shut against you. These are the
"unalterable resolves of your injured and heart broken

"FATHER."

Is't possible? Have not my eyes deceiv'd me?
O gracious Heaven! what load of wretchedness
In one sad month is heap'd upon the creature
Whose fond credulity hath ruin'd her!
O yes, 'tis very true, I was deceitful,
Wicked, and disgraceful; but sure a father,
That once loving, tender father, might have found
Some kinder way t' have told his daughter so;
For my offence, though great, he might have pardon'd,
Being the first he could accuse me of.
My mother too denies to see her daughter,
Nay, ev'n to know perchance her wretched dwelling!
And then—heart-rending misery!—
Deserted by the man on whom my young
And undissembled love has all been wasted!
Yet he may return. *(a knocking at the door.)* Ah! who
can this be?

[Enter Martha's Mother.]

My mother! oh! my dear, dearest mother!

(flies into her arms.)

Moth. Oh! my child! Oh! support me, hold me up.

(near fainting.)

My head is dizzy, and my heart is sick.

Mar. Good Lucy, quickly help me to assist her.

Moth. Ah, Martha! Thy quite murder'd father!
He is no more! Grief pierc'd his good old heart,
And anguish bow'd his head sorrowing to earth!

Mar. My father dead with grief and anguish for me
Before my voice of penitence could reach him,
Or he forgive me! Oh! miserable hour!
Now sure the measure of my grief is full!

Moth. Who is the wretch, and where may he be found,
Who thus hath robb'd us of our happiness?

[*Enter the Woman of the House with a Newspaper.*]

Woman. Here is a newspaper, Mrs. Raymond,
And by it you will find your namesake too
Is lodg'd in prison for a forgery. [*Exit.*

Mar. Good Heav'n, my mother, sure it can't be he!

Moth. Whom didst thou mean?

Mar. Raymond, my——

Moth. Raymond! what, art thou married to him then?
Or he the base seducer of my child?

Mar. Alas, my mother! I must now confess,
Though blushes burn my face in doing so,
He did indeed seduce my easy heart,
(Which ne'er was taught the arts of wicked men,)
By protestations of his love for me,
And promise too of marriage oft declar'd,
If I would leave my father's house, and go
With him to town till things should be arrang'd
And made convenient for our public nuptials;
And love did so impose on simple reason,
I yielded to his wishes and my shame.

But he for some time past hath left me here,
Ev'n unprovided with the needful food.
Oh! nought is left me now but tears and pray'rs,
To beg thy pardon and forgiveness thus. *(kneels.)*

Moth. Rise to my arms, my poor forsaken child;
There's yet a mother's heart to be found here.

(Martha rises, and they embrace.)

And I'll forgive thee for thy father too,
Who in a paroxysm of loud grief,
Just ere death clos'd his clouded eyes in darkness,
His lips all quiv'ring as they pale did grow,
Pressing his hand upon his broken heart,
Cry'd out, "Oh! Martha! I pity and forgive."

Mar. Ah me! I am like an unhappy culprit
Expectant of the dreadful death he merits,
When a reprieve arrests the execution.
How can I thank my dear, my drooping mother,
In terms sufficient for my grateful heart?

Moth. Come, my dear Martha, come along with me,
We'll find the man who hath so injur'd you,
Upbraid him with his falsehood, sting his soul,
And then retire to peaceful solitude,
Far from the haunts of flatt'ry and deceit.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Room in Sir Robert's House.*

Enter LADY POSITIVE and ALYDIA.

Lady P. I'm glad to see thee thus in happy glee.
May it unceasingly, without alloy,
Enliven all thy future days of life,
And thy connubial joys continue new,
And every day produce some fresh delight.

Aly. This is a day shall ever be remember'd
With marks of joy by poor Alydia,
Being the day that blest her with her Delmore,
That made her happy in making him so,
By unity of hands as well as hearts.

Lady P. I hope, sweet girl, that union shall be blest.
Yet such frail men, I fear, there are, who act
Most different parts from that much hop'd of them
Ere our sex' easy hearts are made their own:
For lordly man oft 'gainst the law of Heaven
The walks of gay licentiousness will tread,
Which to our sex most justly are forbidden.

Aly. Dear Lady Positive! I hope my heart
Hath not been lost at hazard of such evil,
For my lov'd Delmore won my sooth'd affections
By sweet soft phrase in silvery accents couch'd;
Not as from vows of hot-brain'd fops and fools.

Lady P. I do think richly of him, I assure you.
Yet, my dear girl, if any time hereafter
Slight cause be found for your upbraiding him,
You'll find it best to know, and not to chide;
For our harsh notes, like music out of tune,
May give offence, and cannot change what's done.
But come, let's in, and meet our merry friends,
Who come to crown thee with their happy wishes.

[*Exeunt*.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A Prison.*

YOUNG RAYMOND discovered in fetters.

Young R. Oh! dread torment, Conscience, wretched spouse,
Why am I wedded to thy stern upbraidings?
Why cannot I appease or shun thine ire?
Why dost thou still repel my pow'r to pray,
Clogging each word and ineffectual effort?
I seem beyond the reach of mercy fall'n!
Why to my tortur'd fancy frightful came
Last night (ah! dreadful night indeed!)
Shadows which terrified my guilty soul?
Methought I strove to turn my eyes to Heav'n,
And as I trembling made the feeble effort,
Surrounded in a golden cloud, all pale,
My murder'd brother angel-like appear'd,
Between two frowning, unrelenting villains,
Lifting his innocent hands, meekly imploring
In vain for mercy; at which they ghastly grinn'd,
And in his breast their fatal daggers planted.
Ah me! poor lamb! the sons of India look'd
Just as my sickly soul did picture these
When this curs'd hand the bloody pelf deliver'd
With the injunction (bitter to remembrance)
"That they be sure he never should return."
Which way soe'er I turn despair awaits me,
Poisons each wish, and buffets all endeavours.

Oh Heav'n! how hard to lose sweet peace of mind,
And, robb'd of pow'r, to sue that peace to find.

[Enter a GAOLER.]

Gaoler. Here are two ladies, sir, who wish to see you.

Young R. Who can they be? (*aside.*) Allow them to come in.

Gaoler. I will. [*Exit*.

[Enter MARTHA and her MOTHER.]

Young R. What do I see? The injur'd Martha and her mother here!
I thought sad Sorrow's cup was full before,
But a new arrow now doth pierce my soul,
Unlocks the flood-gates of my eyes again,
And fills it higher with their briny streams.

Mar. Alas! I can't upbraid him now, dear mother.
'Tis true his treatment of me was most cruel;
But can I see the object of my love
In dreadful solitude, by friends forsaken,
Speechless with sorrow, sinking to the earth,
And not remember that I once did love him? (*weeps.*)

Moth. Dear child, look up, or I shall sink with fear.
This gloomy place, these horrors that surround us,
Alarm my soul, and chill my heart like ice,
Bring on the winter of my life apace,
And now, instead of my reproaching him,
I shall die here all stifled in my grief!
It is a sorry sight!

Mar. Help me! oh! help me, sir!

[Enter GAOLER.]

Gaoler. What is the matter? Is the lady ill?

(*the Mother revives.*)

Moth. Pray lead me to some place that I may sit.
I'm very faint—O Martha, follow me—
I'll wait awhile without till I recover.

O how cold I am. Good friend, lend thy arm.

[Exit, leaning on the Gaoler's arm.

Mar. Yes, my dear mother, I'll soon follow thee,
But first must speak to him. Raymond, look up.
Behold thy injur'd and forgiving girl,
Whose sorrows are made double by thy woes.
Believe me, though, alas! thy truant love
Has cost me many a tear and heart-pierc'd pain,
Yet still I feel a softness stealing on me,
And all my wrongs, within Oblivion's tomb
Lie buried deep, and now shall be forgotten.

Young R. Most injur'd, and most kind of all thy sex,
Thy goodness heaps on me blackest damnation!
Thy dear credulity hath lim'd my soul,
And broke thy tender, unsuspecting heart!

Mar. How could'st thou leave me, wretched and forlorn,
To rove the streets by night for daily succour,
To bear the insults of thy wicked sex,
To wander shelterless amidst cold storms,
Without a friend, or bed to rest my head on?
Indeed, indeed, I thought it hard, my Raymond!
But thy misfortunes bear still harder on me.
How couldst thou, why didst thou commit the act
Which brings this ignominious ruin on thee?

Young R. Ah! dear Martha, thou hast touch'd a string,
A question put I know not how to answer,
Lest it should prove another shaft to wound thee.

Mar. No matter: let me know my greatest grief;
Relief is near when we know all our woe.
Tell me, I pray thee; I can bear the worst,
Severest information thou canst give me,
For I'm now train'd in Misery's hard school;
Tell me the cause of this thy dire disaster.

(Looking steadfastly at her, and after a pause exclaims.)

Young R. Martha!—her wants!—her sorrows!—Raymond's love—

His poverty—which caus'd him to forsake her!
I could not bear to see thee want, and live;
And therefore to supply thy wants I forg'd!

Mar. Oh Heaven! is it for me, for me, Martha!
That thou art plung'd within this gulph of ruin?
Oh! how shall I sustain this double shock?
My heart! my heart! this tenderness wounds more
Than thy suppos'd unkindnesses have done.
And then remembering my father too!

Young R. What of him?

Mar. Dead! His heart did break for my dishonor
And ingratitude.

Young R. Dead! Oh, say not so!
I had before, dear Martha, load enough
Of murd'rous guilt cank'ring upon my soul
To sink it down to bottomless perdition;
But if I had not, this would be sufficient.

Mar. Yes, Raymond, we were the joint murderers
Of the best, truest, kindest, loving father
That ever blest an undeserving child.
His honor was so nice, so chaste his feelings,
He could not live and know of my disgrace;
Yet with his dying breath he pardon'd, blest me!

(weeps.)

[Enter a Gaoler.]

Gaoler. Madam, your mother wishes you to come to her.

Mar. Say I will come, good Gaoler. Now farewell!
And may peace and mercy in abundance flow
On thy repentant, agitated soul,
When least thou dost expect it! Heav'n support thee,
And Death's cold hand fall lightly on thee! Oh!

[*Exit Martha.*

Young R. Oh, earth! open wide, and swallow up a wretch
That would no more pollute the light of heaven!

(throws himself down.)

But yet my thoughts will follow this dear object!
Vain visions all! And yet her goodness brings
A retrospect of joys which still obtrude,
And call remembrance to a weeping task!
I'll give these briny visitors, free welcome.

(Leaning on his hand, weeping.)

This, which erewhile she (credulous soul)
Believ'd a beauteous and delightful temple,
A choicest piece of the Great Architect,
Wherein the throne of Love erected was,
And Truth and every virtue seem'd to dwell;
Now must to her appear a wizzard's tower,
Where Sin enthron'd sits grinning at Deceit,
And Perfidy and every vice applaud! *(weeping.)*

[Enter GAOLER.]

Gaoler. Your grandfather, sir.

Young R. Let him be admitted.

[*Exit Gaoler.*

(Young Raymond continues lying, resting his head on his hand.)

[Enter OLD RAYMOND.]

Old R. Heav'n behold this youthful sacrifice
To stern and unrelenting justice offer'd,
From thy high throne of mercy, pray look down
With pity and with pardon on his soul.
Support my tott'ring frame a little while—
Give me but pow'r to take a last farewell,
And then the business of my life may close,
If thy good will allow it so to be:—
His grief, poor boy, hath mark'd him out a grave.

(looking at him)

Look ye, and see who comes to visit thee:
Rise, rise, dear boy, and let me see thy face,
For grief, though strong, cannot disgrace it now!
And see, my old eyes keep thine company— *(weeps)*

Come to my arms whilst I have pow'r to use them,
And let me bless thee with a father's blessing,
Ere fate shall rob me of the pow'r to do so.

(Old Raymond assists the other to rise.)

Young R. Oh yes, my dearest, best, and kindest friend,
Like a vile serpent I'll hang 'pon thy neck
Just for a moment, till I sting thy ear
With a confession that will strike thee dumb;
Of a black, damning crime, a stain to nature,
Which all I can do will not purge away!

Old R. What crime doth hang so heavy on thy soul?
Unfold, unfold the dreadful secret to me:
My heart heaves high, and now sinks deeply in me—
I trembling listen for the sad disclosure.

Young R. My brother!—Oh my father! how can I
My murd'rous treach'ry to thee ever tell!

Old R. What means my son?

[Enter DELMORE.]

Young R. Ha! What art thou? who thus,
Like my slain brother, grown from youth to manhood,
Dost here obtrude upon my withering sight,
Unfolding, without speech, my blackest guilt.
A wild confusion plays about my brain,
Extends my arteries, thrills o'er my nerves,
And drives me to despair.

Del. I am thy brother! *(goes near to him)*

Young R. My brother! no, no, it cannot be so,
I am unworthy of so kind a name;
Thou shouldst have said I was his murderer!—

Del. I am, indeed, thy brother—thy long-lost,
Thy loving brother, sorrowing ev'n to death
For thy sad, gloomy, and unhappy fate.

Young R. Is't possible! and art thou still alive!

(advancing, steadfastly looks at, and touches him)

Thanks, great heaven! a dreadful weight's remov'd:

And my soul feels in death new life and health.
My sickly and despairing heart again
Assumes a vigor lost to it before;
And I may yet repent and be forgiven.

Old R. His senses are disorder'd—grief makes him thus:
Come, look at us, it was thy noble brother
Who did advance the sum I told thee of.

Young R. Alas, dear sir, I dare not call thee brother;
I thank thee with a sore repentant heart,
And wish to beg thy pardon, and so die;
But know not how to tell the crime and live.

Del. I do not understand thee: pray be plain,
And tell me what doth labor in thy breast?

Young R. Wilt thou believe I caus'd thy wretched exile—
Gave thee to slaves, consented to thy death?

Del. Oh wherefore, brother?—What cause did I give
Ever to thee for such unkindness to me?

Old R. *(aside)* My soul is all amazement and surprise!
It is impossible, it cannot be so!

Young R. No; all my thoughts are on that single object.
To me thou art an heav'nly messenger,
Arriv'd in time to stop my fleeting soul
From journeying to the dismal gates of hell.
Can'st thou forgive me, and quickly too?
For my time's measur'd with a hand severe;
My number'd minutes are, alas, but few!

Old R. *(aside)* I cannot now disturb his anguish'd heart,
Or I'd inquire into the wond'rous tale,
The subject of his late and strange confession:
But after-time, perchance, may it develope. *(turns to him)*
I do, poor boy, here offer up my prayers,
That with true penitence thy hopes be strengthen'd,

And that assurance to thy soul be given
Of future bliss ere death shall close thine eyes.

[Enter GAOLER.]

Gaol. Sir, I have the Sheriff's order that thou prepar'st
Thyself and come with me.—You must leave this place.

(to Old Raymond and Delmore)

Old R. Yes, my friend, we will go,—but spare a moment,
I pray thee, but to take a last farewell;—
Heaven bless, comfort, and support thee!
Farewell! *(Old and Young Raymond embrace)*

Young R. Dost thou, indeed, pardon thy wretched brother,
Who suffer'd more than death a thousand times,
With dread, that thou hadst suffer'd it but once?

Del. I do, I do! *(they embrace)* Farewell!—farewell!

[Enter another GAOLER.]

Gaol. Bring out the prisoner, for his time is past.

Young R. I thank thee, and once more I call thee brother,
A good and kind, a dear forgiving brother.

Old R. Farewell! and may we meet in those blest realms
Where souls are bathing in eternal bliss.

[*Exit Old Raymond and Delmore.*

Young R. I trust we shall; Hope hath resum'd her pow'r,
And as the light doth close upon my eyes,
I feel a comfort rising in my soul
Greater than I expected or deserv'd.

[*Exeunt with Gaolers.*

SCENE II. *The place of Execution.*

[*A Scaffold hung with black, at the further end of the Stage.—A part of the apparatus of death discovered.—Marshalmen, Constables, and Spectators.—Executioner on the Scaffold.*]

Enter YOUNG RAYMOND and GAOLERS. (*A* CLERGYMAN *meets them as they enter.*)

Cler. Your venerable grandfather requested me
To meet you here and join my prayers to thine.

Young R. For this great goodness I thank him and you.
He always was a tender loving man;
Supply'd the gentle offices of parent.
The only fault which his soft nature has
Is thinking all men blameless as himself,
Needing no other check than their own honor.

Cler. Thou hast thy soul prepar'd with true contrition
To meet th' inevitable stroke of death?

Young R. I've ta'en a retrospect of all my vices,
Of avarice, drunkenness, and dissipation,
Of black designs 'gainst innocence and truth,
To the last crime for which I come to suffer,
And found the former brought this ruin on me.

(*bell tolls*)

The dismal crisis of my fate is near!
Here end the gay delusions of this world,
Here vice and folly meet their just reward!

(*Turning to the scaffold; the bell tolls.*)

'Tis dreadful! but let Heav'n's high will be done!
Oh! were but man from my sad fate to learn,
And well remember this great solemn truth,
That certain punishment on crimes awaits,
I shall not for the world have liv'd in vain.

(*Raymond and the Clergyman ascend the scaffold together. The bell continues tolling, and the curtain falls slowly as they ascend.*)

NOTE ON THE FORGERY.

This play should be received by our readers with indulgence. In the conception of the characters there is great force and originality; and the defects of the execution are really so trivial, that no candid mind will for a moment allow them to weigh against the true dramatic beauty which is impressed on the delineation of the characters. But what we would chiefly direct their attention to in this piece, is the old-fashioned, but true English, tone of the sentiment and language, which give to the composition more of the ancient flavor than many dramas of a more ambitious kind, written professedly on the models of our great masters of the stage.

We conceive that the grand object of the "Rejected Theatre" is to be principally attained by bringing the attention of our readers, as often as possible, to the consideration of the genuine characteristics of the English drama. On the Continent there are two classes of dramatic compositions—the German, and the French and Italian. We place the two latter in one class, because the regular drama of Italy exactly resembles that of France. In the German theatre there is a constant endeavour to elevate sensibility above reason: and the consequence is, that although the German tragedies display astonishing powers of fancy and feeling, they have a great deal of absurdity about them. The reverse of this is to be found in the tragedies of France and Italy. They exhibit powers of ratiocination quite as wonderful as the excessive sensibility of the Germans; but they are in due proportion inferior in point of feeling. The great French authors per-

suade us to pity, and to become terrified; and the Italians, with only one exception besides Alfieri, do the same thing; while the Germans attempt to excite our sympathies at the expense of our understanding. In neither the one country or the other do we think the true principles of the tragic art are yet understood. The two theatres are founded on hypothetical notions; and while they profess to imitate the actions of men, they only perform the conceptions of philosophers.

The English stage is radically different from that of the two continental classes; and though none can admire Shakespeare more than we do, nor re-peruse his wonderful works with more increasing delight, it is not, we trust, saying too bold a thing, to assert that although the English have happened to strike into the proper path, they have not yet any right to arrogate to themselves the claim of decided superiority. During the whole of the last century they were truants from their own school, and imitators of the southern continental; they afterwards made a sudden and short transition to the northern; but it was less calculated to interest a reasoning and practical people, than that in which logic was more considered; and they have lately turned from it with disgust. Whether they will immediately resume their own proper path, time must determine; but the appearance of Mr. Kean on the stage of Drury-Lane is, we think, an auspicious event.

The characteristic of the true English stage is the imitation of the natural actions of men, and of the feeling and reasoning suggested by the circumstances in which they are placed. But our great dramas, those master-pieces of metaphysical discrimination, which are never seen but with renewed pleasure, nor read without augmenting our knowledge of the human heart, are often deficient in good taste. Imitation in them has been carried too far; and many impertinences are introduced, which, though perfectly natural,

are great blemishes, for they are not essential to the business of the piece; or, where they are so, might have been changed for others more consistent with the tone of the subject. Our great plays are like noble statues painted, they have received that which makes them offensive without improving the merits of their execution. The desideratum of the modern English drama (we are speaking of Tragedy) is that natural ease, force, and dignity of execution, which characterizes the works of the old masters, without the occasional buffoonery, and extraneous disquisitions, which are foreign to the business of the play, such as often disfigure the admirable compositions of Shakespeare.

THE GENII;

A MASQUE.

BY

ANDREW BECKET,

Author of 'Lucianus Redivivus,'—'A Trip to Holland,'—'Socrates; a Dramatic Poem,'—'Public Prosperity,' in No. 4, Pamphleteer, &c.

ADVERTISEMENT.

As in the present performance the *Supreme Being* is at one time made mention of, and *Jupiter* at another, it may possibly happen that the scrupulous, yet well-meaning critic, will take alarm, and exclaim against that which he will consider as a mixture of Paganism and Christianity, a blending of *false* religion and *true*. But on this I must be allowed to observe, that such objection would be by no means valid, as the *Pagan* Deities (so denominated) are regarded *typically*, even by the ancients themselves; and that, in composition, the influence said to belong to each is merely intended to signify, and according to the ordinary language of poetry, *the attributes of the Godhead*. This censure, as to what is called the intermingling of Christianity and Heathenism, which, by the way, has very injudiciously been passed on some of our most esteemed authors, and which has arisen with persons who have not sufficiently reflected on the causes that have led to it, I think right to invalidate. A more beautiful system than that of the Greek mythology could not be invented for the use of the poet.[1] To suppose that it must necessarily include the worship of idols, is truly absurd; yet such is commonly the idea annexed to it.

However, and to remove all objection in this matter, we may fairly conclude, that the imaginary Deities are nothing more than the several powers of Nature personified. The fancied *being* which thus is given to Nature's operations, in the character of immortal agents, is that which constitutes the great beauty of the ancient machinery, and which, as I before remarked, it is not very easy to *equal* in

[1] See the Preface to Bacon "On the Wisdom of the Ancients."

any other allegorical scheme which might be devised, and certainly impossible to *surpass*.

In this production, some few lines will be found which were formerly printed with proposals for a dramatic poem intitled LAVINIA, and by way of specimen of the work: a work, however, which I never had an opportunity of giving to the world. As the lines in question (about fifty in number) were better suited to my present purpose; they are accordingly made use of: a circumstance I thought adviseable to mention, lest any person should perchance have recollected them, and thence have charged me (as they appeared anonymously) with printing verses which were not my own.

ANDREW BECKET.

CHARACTERS.

THE GOOD GENIUS.	}
ZEPHON, and attendant Spirits.	}
THE EVIL GENIUS.	}
ATTENDANT SPIRITS.	}

MARCELLUS.

SIMONIDES.

GALATEA.

Captain of the Guard belonging to Dionysius of Syracuse.

SCENE—TRINACRIA (now *Sicily*).

THE GENII;

A Masque.

SCENE I. *The Confine of a Wood.*

The Good Genius enters.

In that bright region of the middle air,
Abode of chosen beings who partake
Of the celestial nature—Genii call'd--
My proper station is: for of the order
Of these, the lesser deities, I am:
And veritable it is, though men think fabled,
That unto each of the whole human race
Two dæmons are assign'd, of equal power,
The one to virtue, the other to vice inciting them;
(True legitime progeny they of Heaven and Hell,)
Who, from the first breath to the last, attendant
Are ever found, or by their agency influencing.
Now I on earth, with human form invested,
Am come as man's Good Genius, friendship's name
And office bearing, while I mark the path
That to the consecrated temple leads
Of honor, truth, and justice.—Glorious goal!
A goal which whoso attains at once perceives
A more than mortal animation warm

His full-swoln, throbbing bosom. Native dignity,
A perfect sense of the high rank he holds
In vast creation's round, still more ennobled
By his own virtuous deeds, awakes such consciousness,
That worldly limitations seem to him
But made for worldly men. Through all the barriers
By these set up, his ardent soul would break;
Fain would it soar, fain reach the ethereal space,
Or higher empyreum, where the Hierarchy,
The host of Angels, met in holy synod,
And deep revolving on eternal mind,
Prepare to execute the sov'reign will.—
Yes, to that place his eager eye is turn'd,
That blissful place, where man's belighted spirit,
All clear, all comprehensive—once so bounded!
And with still purer essences communing,
Loses in love divine all sensual pleasures.
For this he panted whom 'twas mine to lead
Through the drear mazes of this nether world.
(And now, supremely blest, on seraph wing
He gains the glorious mansion of the skies;
Meet recompense for goodness next to Heaven's.)
Yet even on earth his joys were all sublime,
For those of mind alone he knew to cherish.
By me embolden'd, too, he calmly travers'd
The vasty desart, haunt of savage men—
A new Alcides, emulous of good—
Nor fear'd more potent. nor more subtle foe,
Clos'd in his coat of steel, the gift of Truth!
In vain the Evil Genius spread his wiles,
His glittering baits, to draw him to the springe:
Onward he mov'd contemptuous; for the arts
Of vice he saw, though gloss'd with virtue's seeming.
im, and all such superior genii honor.
ut oh! sad case, when he who thwarts me ever,

The envious dæmon, using all his cunning,
Like to a black magician with his spells,
Has practis'd on the weak, unthinking heart,
And brought it to his lure. Some time, some little time,
An inmate he becomes of Pleasure's palace;
Her magic palace! Beauty's sparkling glance
Invites him to the masque, the midnight revel,
Where reign, still varying, ever new delights.
Next the gay, festive board allures his eye
With fancied charms. Anon his raptur'd spirits
Send him quick-bounding like the hart to join it.
He tastes ambrosia! nectar's in the cup!
But soon he finds the whole was touch'd with poison.
But to my sacred duties: or the name
Of Abdiel, servant of the Most Highest, but ill
To me would appertain. Hear then those duties
Yet better pleasures call'd. My well-tried charge
No sooner join'd the immortals, than another
Was to my tutorage given. The loved youth,
The princely youth, whom I am now to prompt
To all such generous, all such noble conduct,
As though his place be high, shall most distinguish it;
Yes, with the princely boy become my care
I straight must converse hold, and put in act
Those sweet propensities, those dear affects,
Which even in childhood budded, promise giving
To grow and ripen with his growing stature.
O happy nonage, my strict watch not demanding;
But that now nearly past, it well behoves me
To counteract the dark, the deep designs
Of my fell rival, Satan. Such the name
By which earth knows him. Albeit the agent only
Of him who bears it vauntful, man's prime enemy,
The great deceiver, parent of sin and death!

Well, young Marcellus, soon shall it be known
If thine be actual worth, or merely semblative.
So much hast thou to encounter, that the experienced
Might bend, perchance succumb, on such assailment.
Beset on all sides, great will be the peril:
Yet, if from forth the field thou victor com'st,
How vast must be thy merits! None assisting;
No mortal arm! " Nor can I succour offer,
Since over human actions no power is given me:
A spirit of persuasion simply am I, and man,
In all free agent; and thence his honor or ignominy:
For as he demean himself, or one or other
Will to him attach, nor in his death be forgotten.
But he I am bound to instruct will soon be here;
For these calm scenes of pure and simplest nature
His meditative humor most affects.
I must be then mere mortal, and the name
Of Abdiel wholly forego for that of Socius;
The appellation by which mankind acknowledge me.
Cruel exchange, but that the prospect's gladsome;
For should this youth escape the present danger,
Should he resist the allurements of my adversary,
I then may quit him; safe, though unprotected;
Safe in his innate goodness—fully assay'd —
His character on Virtue's tablet blazon'd—
Thus think I of him; yet watchful will be, and by vision
Precepts impart as in my earthly capacity.
Then may I seek again my airy dwelling,
And all my proud distinctions at once resume,
All my celestial properties—a free spirit!
Till death has shut Marcellus in the tomb,
And some new duty calls me.——

But it is meet that soon my sprites
I summon, and perform the rites;
Those holy rites, which though but shown

In vision, still shall for my own
Fix this adolescent so rare,
This imp, deserving all my care.
Then hail'd as mine and Virtue's son,
He no inglorious race will run;
And if in arts or arms renown
He gain, decreed the festive crown,
That fame shall live, though quench'd his fire,
Nor but with time itself expire.
Zephon, and ye inferior sprites, be present,
When she, the glory of the stars, shall next
Pursue her splendid course, we mean to send
In solemn act our thanks to highest Heaven
For all the bounties on us and man long showered.
Prepare the custom'd rites, that so the Eternal
Be ever honor'd in our love and duty.

Zephon. Prince, we this summons joyfully obey;
And still more pleas'd will execute your orders.
'The time when Cynthia revels we most affect,
The time so meet for sacrifice and homage.

Cynthia with her silvery light
Chaces away black-visag'd night,
The while bright Hesperus is seen,
Conductor of the enchanting Queen.
Now she will dance the wavy main,
Attended by her starry train;
Then, ever changeful, dart with speed,
And gambol o'er the daisied mead;
Anon ascend the craggy steep,
To watch Endymion in his sleep;
Next graceful seek the leafy grove,
Temp'ring the youthful breast to love;
Or by some violet-border'd stream
Induce the calm, poetic dream,
Which, 'mid the haunts of Philomel,
Each gentler spirit loves to tell;

While he, fine-frenzied, Fancy's child,
Who joys to roam the wood and wild,
More deeply touch'd, the ecstatic song
Pours out the rugged rocks among,
Till Echo, waken'd by the sound,
Sends through each cave, in quick rebound,
The notes, which lesser echoes bear
Murmuring—soon lost in distant air!
Now too the lone enthusiast strays,
Chaunting his great Creator's praise;
Or else contemplative he walks,
Or with the unembodied talks
Enraptur'd, till sleep close his eyes,
When visions still sublimer rise.
These are the charms which Heaven bestows,
Soft'ning men's self-created woes;
Boons that full oft to transports move,
Scarce less than we, the air-born, prove.

Genius. Yet, ere these rites, have ready at my call
The several phantasms we so late devised
To charm the young Marcellus.

Zephon. Abdiel, we go;
And, best-belov'd, doubt not our care and diligence.

Genius. Yes, dear associates, ye were faithful ever.
Then to your task; away! Here comes my pupil.
Slowly he moves, on some grave matter pondering;
And now aloud he with himself is reasoning.
I will remain unseen by him awhile:
Perchance I that way may some bosom secret
Discover, which otherwise yet hidden might be
From me, his friend profess'd, and as such admitted
A youthful timidity, or it may be shame,
(If shame belong thereto) urging to concealment.
But I must now my sky-tinct vest put on,
Work of Minerva's hand; and being composed

Of filmy dews, lies in this ring's small compass.
This must I do, and into air resolve me;
For so 'twill be, or, I should rather say,
So seem; since all will then to his dim sight
Be perfect vacancy: nor can I again my shape,
My human semblance, assume till doff'd this habit,
This heavenly robe, for heavenly purpose given me.
Now then, unconscious, he to me will impart
His joys or sorrows. Much I wish to know them;
Not idly curious, but a dear love to him bearing,
A love which prompts me to be his adviser.

[MARCELLUS enters.]

Mar. This interdiction of my honor'd father
Should be in all obey'd, however painful,
However adverse to my dearest wishes.
On foreign travel long my hopes have rested,
But this is now forbidden. Strict the mandate;
And yet no reason for such restraint assign'd me.
O, Anacharsis! thou whose splendid mind
'Mid Græcia's sons acquir'd still greater splendor,
Who, by thy wayfare through her happy states,
Hast to thyself and countrymen procured
Such high advantage, how must those be envied!
Fortunate youth, who no restriction know'st!
To thee a large, extensive route was given,
A route which led to pleasure, fame, and profit.
For me, beyond the circuit of Trinacria,
This little isle, my steps must never deviate;
My views all narrow'd by its own narrow limits.
My soul, disdainful of these trammels, pants,
Even while it owns a parent's high supremacy,
For objects worthy of its nobler exercise.
In this dilemma, what should I determine?
A bold remonstrance on this last proceeding
Is yet remaining for me—I will try it.

Genius. I must some counsel give him, or this warmth
May lead to serious mischiefs. All hail, Marcellus.

Mar. All hail, my full-approved, high-valued friend.
Grieved though I am, thy presence sure will cheer me.

Genius. Whence this dejection? whence these sounds of
sorrow?

Mar. Whence! When my honest pleasures are all
denied me,
Much cause for sorrow, or much I err, good Socius.
'Tis to thy guidance, thy advice, I owe
My once happy state of mind; which yet had remain'd,
But that my budding hope to tread the steps
Of him who many men and manners saw
Lies wholly blasted. See me now condemn'd
To yawn out life in wretched inactivity.

Genius. Must thou inactive be because forbidden
In foreign climes to roam? Much may be urged
Against such peregrination, as well as for it,
Since every land both good and evil produces.
'Tis true, indeed, that the superior character,
(He that's by vice untouch'd, arm'd, and right proof
Against her machinations, charms, and smiles—
For smiles and charms she has, though meretricious);
To him who thus can boast, who thus is shielded,
Good may arise from travel.—That enlargement,
That comprehensiveness of mind, of intellect,
Which brings to the possessor highest honor.
Yet so acknowledging I would not infer
That this unattain'd will be by private study.
Nay, from this last perhaps the greater advantage
Derivable is; since much will ever depend
On genius, disposition, inbred qualities;
In fine, whom Nature far more than man has fashion'd,
But to relieve thy sorrows. Tell me, therefore,
In what I best may serve thee.

Mar. This is most kind.

Genius. Good youth! And yet thou little know'st how
much
I have labor'd for thee in the world's opinion,
How oft set forth thy virtues to full view,
And bade the admiring people tend them nicely.
This, like the sun's beams to the opening flower,
Has into day brought that which else had wither'd.
But when some future hour shall fuller reveal me,
Perhaps thou'lt grant I am not a talking friend,
One prodigal of words alone or promises,
One who at will from forth his guileful eye
Pours tears as do the Lamiæ, when those tears
May best entice their victim.

Mar. But I shall lose thee;
For thou hast said that soon to distant regions
Thy steps must be directed. Ah me, unhappy!
Friendship, all-powerful friendship, that enchants us
By ever new regards, say whence thy being?
Earth-born or heavenly art thou? Heavenly certain:
Yet, like Astrea, visiting this ball
In pity to our hapless, woe-worn race,
Not long your sojourn here,—or one or other.
And wilt thou go? and may I not accompany thee?

Genius. That cannot be. Take from me this assurance,
Means of swift travel I have, and frequent will visit thee.

Mar. Thy words bring comfort; nay more, for now as
ever
New life I find when thou but merely counsel'st me.
I know not whence thou art, or what; but know
Thou seem'st my better angel, my good genius!

Genius. Right hast thou judg'd, and such I stand con-
fess'd;
But still as Socius merely must thou speak of me.
Temperance thou lean'st to. Now I to thy sight

Will raise such beauteous and majestic vision,
That thou shalt be enamour'd of her fully;
Unless the Evil Genius, my proud enemy,
And who, like me, has leave to call, in aid
Of all his purposes, the sprites of air,
Shall by his fascinations more engage thee;
For gay Volupia still attends his beck,
And loves on youth to practise all her witcheries.
I cannot, like to him, a promise give thee
Of pleasures wholly from bodily sense arising,
Since mine are calm enjoyments, by Reason sanction'd;
Nor can I countervail the least his artifice.
But soon of these thou wilt have power to determine.
Thou hast thy choice—with him or me may side.
Yet much I hope to hail thee my adopted,
While Virtue thou shalt greet as foster-mother.

Mar. Agent of Heaven! I list thy sacred counsels.
Say then what course pursue, O how conduct me.

Genius. Hear then. Forbidden, for reasons no doubt cogent,
And which thou soon wilt know, to quit thy country;
Yet think not that thy coming years must thence
Be dozed in all unprofitably away,
Or that, on Luxury's couch supinely thrown,
To conjure up imaginary wants,
Make fancied evils, and then to Heaven complain
Of its hard dealings with thee, is befitting
This thy high station—practis'd too oft by many!
For other purpose have life and health been given thee.
But still thou fear'st, if kept at home, thy days
Will pass ingloriously, that senseless apathy
Must in such case the sure concomitant be.
Yet wherefore this? Large store of wealth thou hast,
Extensive thy domain, and great thy power.
Look then around thee, and employ all these

As well becomes the lord of such possessions.
Search out for virtue, merit, palsied age,
Sickness and labor sinking under penury;
Then, if thou canst, be idle; and idle, wretched.
If with indifference thou canst view men's ills,
Blest as thou art with every earthly comfort,
I will at once renounce, forsake thee wholly;
Nay, thus degenerate, all shall learn to shun thee.
Yet wherefore talk of sloth? Marcus' first wish
Has been to see his eldest born a soldier.

Mar. Oft he with strenuousness hath urged me to it.

Genius. At length resolv'd on this, he doth expect
Thy full compliance.

Mar. O direful tidings!

Genius. How say'st thou—direful thy lov'd country serving?

Mar. All war is direful. I am no coward, Socius,
Yet, should stern Fortune take me to the field,
Pity, the eldest daughter of the skies,
Would aye be in my sight. Methinks I see her,
When the dread battle rages at its full,
In heavenly radiance skim along the plain;
Anon behold her mount the glittering car
Of some great warrior: with streaming, downcast eyes
She strives to move him—He regards her not,
But levels at the coming foe his lance—
His lance she seizes, and would turn its point
From wretched man, to wound the air alone;
But fierce Bellona lends her savage aid,
New nerves his arm, and gives the deadly blow.
The balmy goddess hangs her head, and sighs.
Still with becoming fortitude she bears
The view, while Fury rouses to the fight;
Yet, when the battle's done, she thinks that those
Who show'd like pards or tigers in their rage

Will hear her heavenly voice. With sounds as bland
As Zephyrus when first he wakes the spring,
She whispers in the victor's ear the law—
That law by gods ordain'd to aid the afflicted;
To give to trembling agony assuagement,
The balm of comfort, and the hopes of peace.
Is she unheeded still?—then farewell virtue!
Farewell to all that marks our nobler kind:
Let man no longer boast himself supreme,
But give to lesser animals his place—
His rank in the creation.

Genius. Fine declaimer!
What boots this virtue which thou vaunt'st so bravely?
Do we not daily see this boasted pity
Dash'd to the ground and trampled on by those
To whom she stretch'd her arm out in the hour
Of danger and dismay? Do we not see her
Stabb'd to the heart while pouring oil i'the wounds
Which the dread fates with erring hand had made?

Mar. Too sure we see it; and too sure ingratitude,
The first-born fiend of hell, too oft appears
On earth, and spreads her baleful influence round:
Yet shall we think the many imbibe the poison—
Gladly imbibe it?—far, far be such opinion!
It is the great prime quality in man
To feel for others' miseries and to soothe them.

Genius. Yet hast thou thought what splendors will await thee
If from the field victorious thou return'st?—
The pride of conquest and renown's bright palm?

Mar. Conquest!—renown!—O spare the hateful image!

Genius. So victory in the world's large volume's written,
So 'tis explain'd, whate'er the cause of quarrel:
But though the laurel decks thy victor-brow—

Though an admiring people give the welcome
With shouts and songs of triumph, still thy bosom,
By sympathy's sweet influence mov'd, can feel
For the vast wretchedness Bellona brings,
Too surely brings to all who bear her standard,
Or conquering or subdued—I did but speak
Of savage war in terms of seeming favor,
To try thy nature. War, indeed, is infamous,
Save the defensive—justifiable ever.
And such Trinacria still may have to sustain.
You hate your tyrant ruler, but you love
Your fruitful country, therefore will protect it
Against the invader wholly bent on rapine.

Mar. To the last spark of life, I would defend it.
But 'tis not now our country's cause that calls us,
'Tis Dionysius' battles we must fight:—
The expedition by himself projected,
Plann'd, there is little doubt, but to divert
From his own head the mischiefs so long threat'ning him,
Will, on a mild and ever-pacific people,
Bring dire calamity and, it may be, ruin.
My father sees not this usurper's baseness,
Or to such hateful warfare he would not urge me.

Genius. I feel my rival near. Now, kindred spirits,
Attend, and bring in vision all those pleasures
That purer souls delight in: let graceful dance
With sweetest minstrelsy be brought in aid of them:
Meet show for him, the youth whose days are given
To heaven-touch'd poesy, and who strikes the lyre
With boldest hand, a master in the art.
The Muses love him, and at their command,
I on his head Castalian dews distill'd,
High grace, though not like that which Melasigenes
Did from their mighty prince receive. But still,
Such inspiration had he, that his name

Shall live in after times—Trinacria's glory!

ZEPHON *and other inferior spirits.*

Goddess! each rude passion quelling,
Take Marcellus to thy dwelling;
Quiet! so full confess'd of truth
And goodness, nurse, receive this youth.
He most unfit fell war to wage:
Receive, retain him, as the gage
For peace within your lov'd retreats,
(The virtues' and the muses' seats).
He with the nymphs the hallow'd groves
Of old Sylvanus frequent roves.
How, on the pearly river's brink
Must he then love to sit and think
With thee of Nature's higher laws,
Or ponder on the great first cause,
Who to the world's stupendous frame
Gives life and order:—Boons that claim
Our sense of good: the which we own,
In peals sent up to mercy's throne!

Genius. But see our foe is here; awhile retire we:

[*The Evil Genius enters with his attendant spirits.*]

Now then, confederate spirits, let us prove
Our zeal in this great service. Abdiel's powers
Are all employ'd against us: all at work
To win the young Marcellus to his purpose.
We must devise some show, some splendid pageantry,
To catch his eye. The inexperienced mind,
Not long against the fascinating mockery,
Will make resistance. Soon his boasted virtues,
His self-denials, into air shall vanish!
The while his proud preceptor stands confounded!—
No little glory ours in such a warfare
To come off victors.—Victors over him
Who boasts celestial succors.—Think on that,

And let the unequal contest more inspire ye.
'Tis true, indeed, the Genii of our order
Far more successful are than those of Abdiel,
Since mortals almost all to luxury's charms
Her witching beauties turn a willing eye.
Not such the present tempter of this stripling.
Tutor'd by him we hate, he yet withstands
Our gay allurements. Something more attractive
Must, then, I say, be practis'd: some bright vision—
Some fine illusion—till in the giddy whirl,
His senses lost, his reason quite thrown down,
We straightway claim him subject of our master.

Genius. Behold the fiend! we now must try our strength with him.

Zephon. Gold-hair'd Aurora wakes the day
And glittering Phaneus takes his way
Over high heaven's transparent arch:
The horæ following his proud march,
Grac'd with the ensign of his sway;
A sceptre, bearing on its top an eye,
To note that through his means we all things do descry.

Hark! the sweet melodious measures!
Hear ye not music's thrilling notes,
Brought by Favonius' breath that floats
Balmy, inducing pastoral pleasures.
See! a true Tempe we enjoy,
And now the rural nymphs advance;
Haste not away then, gentle boy,
But join our sacred song and dance.
Our delights have no alloy,
Pastimes that the soul entrance,
Sports, we own, which love the light,
No veil'd Cotyttia of the night

By us are known. The flower-sprent green,
Press'd by the silver-footed queen,
Receives new fragrance, grows more bright,
As to Comarchian strains, she lightly moves,
While round the graces play, and ever-blooming loves.
Who feel Minerva's holy fire,
Beyond the servile mind inspire;
Quickly they flee from pomp and show,
Too frequent precursors of woe.
So here mid shady groves and bowers
Serenely glide the short-liv'd hours,
While we due adoration give
To the great power by whom we live.
This can alone true peace impart,
This the true rapture of the heart.

Evil Genius. Away! nor think that joys like these,
Such unsubstantial joys can please.
Let the poor transports of the mind
To poring school-men be confin'd:
We genuine pleasures, higher rate,
Smoothing the asperities of fate.
Lo, where the rosy God appears,
The God that woe-worn mortals cheers,
Mirthful and in eternal youth,
The great dictator still of truth.
He seeks our light disportive throng,
To join with him, renown'd in song,
The mighty Sol; who doth dispense
Impartial his blest influence.
Hail, Deities! that make both day
And night all-joyous, ever gay.
Your gifts anticipate the sky,
And lap the soul in ecstacy.
For wine and verse were surely given
As foretastes of the bliss of heaven.

Bacchus behold,—as erst he came
Leading the Cytherean dame—
Beauteous as from the wave she rose,—
Around her humid eyes she throws
Blissful: while on her lip the sigh,
The half-fram'd murmuring accents die.—
A goddess sure! and hail'd above
As here below—the queen of love.
Bacchus and Venus, powers divine,
Lowly we bend before your shrine,
You our great solace here on earth,
Since dire Pandora s plagues had birth.

Zephon. Daughter of heaven—immortal truth!
Behold this brave, ingenuous youth:
O shed thy radiance o'er his mind,
Then shall these phantoms to the wind
Be quickly given; High-rais'd his name;
The foe far fled in fear and shame.

Inferior of the Evil Genii. Come; no more reject our proffers:
Far be from you such vain scoffers—
Railers at pleasures their dull taste
Could never relish. Haste, O haste
To dwell with mirths. Here be the whole
Known 'twixt the extremes of either pole.

Superior of the Evil Genii. Yet listen: we will more ensure
Than these our agents can procure.
All elements we know: the earth,
Air, fire, or water, fit our birth.
So the extremest points we try—
Delve to the centre, mount the sky!
Till with the labor tir'd we lave
Our limbs in Neptune's watry cave.

Now, then, observe how we have sped :
See ! Coral from old Ocean's bed
We bear, with gems which far outshine
The choicest of Golconda's mine :
Pearls, which e'en Beauty's self might wear,
Snatch'd from bright Berenice's hair.
So we command the stars :—can sway
The queen of night and king of day.
Task then our service :— Shall we bring
Jupiter's belt, or Saturn's ring ?
But, more in hope to gain renown,
Would you fam'd Ariadne's crown ?
Or do you wish for purest gold
From Pluto's realm ? Your slaves behold !
Speak, then ! nor fear our aim we miss,
'Twixt heaven's high dome and hell's abyss.

Evil Genius. Some mortal tread approaches, seek your covert.
We must not now be seen. Soon will I summon ye.

Good Genius. Who is that female pacing yonder glade ?
In meditation lost she not descries us.

Marcellus. 'Tis Galatea, good Simonides' daughter,
Lovely as Eous, when from forth the cave
Of Nox she issues, to announce great Sol,
The brilliant God—he who to all creation
Gives health and vigor, evermore maintaining them.
Happy Simonides! and in his muse most happy :
For not in Doric or Æolic verse,
Or even Ionian, far the most esteem'd ;
Not in the Lyric song nor Epic flight
Is he surpass'd—save by the Theban swan
And the Mæonian eagle—claim'd of many.
Nor think this praise, though high, is undeserved,
Since with the Teian and famed Lesbian maid,
In competition oft hath he been set,
Nor found inferior. Blest thus in himself,

Nor seeking adventitious good from any.
He with his daughter in yon woody wild
Leads the primeval life in all its dignity:
Ascetic seeming, though without austerities.
Long has he thus in calm seclusion dwelt,
Yet much has suffered;—but, that this peerless woman,
If woman I must say, whose every action,
Whose every deed, superior nature intimates;
With watch incessant to his necessities ministers;
Nay, makes that burthen light which else would press
Full heavy on him, for his years are many.—
Yes, much has she endured to aid this father,
From the world's contumely and scorn has sav'd him,
Combating perils; at her life's hazard combating them.
But this from the All-seeing will meet with just reward

Genius. Most sure. What better can claim celestial favor
Than love of parents, kindred, or of friends:
But filial chiefest.—Above that sacred duty
(Due homage first the father of mercies given)
Nought could be found: nor is there aught so enviable.
It is from such affections that the soul
Takes its best energies; derives its fire.
Not touch'd by those, even genius, wisdom, valor,
Lose of their brightness: sink in estimation,
With Virtue's sons. Not so for Galatea:
I know her excellence, nor hast thou overrated it--
Scarce more Æneas, old Anchises bearing
Forth from his shoulders from the flames of Troy,
Renown deserved. Scarce more the Roman matron,
The virtuous Arria, when in her breast the dagger
Deeply she plung'd, and then to Pætus gave it;
The while she calmly bade him use it likewise;
Adding, with smiles, "believe me 'tis not painful."

Mar. And yet such beauty in this desart fading,

This dreary solitude to her must—

Genius. Speak not thus;
For Galatea, like thyself, is charm'd
Of blest retirement; celestial solitude!
Of this be sure, that heart is incorrupt
Which finds in such a state its best enjoyments.
In a sequester'd life, the active virtues
(Though this to some a paradox may seem)
Show themselves more than with the crowd immingled.
To him who knows its charms, its actual pleasures;
All others are but mockery, mere illusions:
'Tis there all worth, all excellence concentres,—
In cities seldom seen; or seen—fantastic,
Unreal: on ostentatious charity display'd,
While vice, perhaps, holds empire in the breast,
And scatters mischiefs as Tisiphone scatters them
But see, the Sylvan nymph of whom we speak,
In haste retires; alarm'd at our intrusion.

Genius. Blest spirits! to Galatea raise the song.

Zephon. Goddess of the silver bow,—
Huntress Dian, kindly show
To thy follower in the chace,
To thy virgin votary, grace.
Galatea! She who claims
A place among the brightest names,
Which thou, impartial, hast set down
As worthy of the star-deck'd crown
To virtue promis'd. 'Tis for her,
For Galatea, we prefer
Humbly our suit. O lend thine ear,
And favor grant her—goddess dear!
So shall she, pure, distinguish'd dame,
Like thee still live in endless fame.

2

O Piety! illustrious fair,—
(Devote to Heaven, and thence its care)

Behold a maid, from thine own school:
She, practis'd in each sovereign rule
By thee laid down, our faith to prove,
Regardful of the Almighty's love.
Thy precepts, which a parent's good
To seek, enjoin—(least understood)
By her are held as holy laws,
And strictly follow'd. Thus she draws
From her own breast that true delight
Which smiles in Fortune's utmost spite.
Then, ever-gracious—while on earth
Point out such high unequall'd worth,
That when translated to the skies,
She more attract our wondering eyes.

(Other of Abdiel's band of spirits enter, habited like Sicilian shepherds.)

1 *Spirit.* See! 'tis full meridian day,
And the sprightly Auræ play
Around us,—fragrant odors bringing;
Which from their downy pinions flinging,
Nature revives with livelier bloom,
More widely spread the rich perfume.

2 *Spirit.* With Io Pœans, fill the air;
Trinacria still is Phœbus' care.
Here he casts his kindlier rays,
Here sing we then his higher praise;
Let songs, let pœans reach the sky,
Such as with Delphic hymns may vie!

3 *Spirit.* Lo, at our call the glorious Nine—
Urania first, yclep'd divine;
And justly so; who never sings
Of aught save heaven and heavenly things;
While next Melpomene appears
In all her beauty—bath'd with tears:
Follow'd by her of studied wiles,
Thalia bright, the queen of smiles.

Then comes Euterpe, whose sweet strain
The list'ning ear must long detain.
Clio, whose pen inscribes the name
Of worthies on the roll of fame.
Erato, who might e'en in Jove
Kindle anew the flames of love.
Terpsichore, whose graceful ease
In dancing evermore will please.
Polhymnia, memory's firm friend,
Wont on the youthful mind to tend:
And last, Calliope, whose voice
Makes Nature's general soul rejoice.
All hail, Aonian maids! the knee,
To you, and bright Mnemosyne,
Your happy mother—see we bend;
Votaries so faithful then befriend.
Our breasts inform: and O inspire
Some portion of your heavenly fire.
So we the great Apollo's praise
May sound in ever-living lays.

4 *Spirit.* Now sing we universal Pan,
Great Nature's symbol; He whom Man
In lowliest reverence hails a God!
Life's prime sustainer! At whose nod,
Eleus and Ceres, their large store,
Gain'd from the earth's warm bosom, pour
Forth to the world in amplest measure,
Whence spring health and peace and pleasure
O Deity! from out the hills
Where now thou roam'st, recruit the rills,
By Sirius drain'd—and still your eye
Kept watchful, Nymphs! our founts supply.
Yet more. Kind Power, protect our flocks,
As now they stray o'er Etna's rocks.
Nor let the heifers of the vale
In udder'd treasure ever fail:

Still give the gold rod of our fields
Unmildew'd. Grant what Terra yields
Pure; and to thee in sacrifice
Flames from our altars quick shall rise.

Good Genius. Again the wily machinator appears.

[EVIL GENIUS *enters, with his attendant Spirits.*]

1st Sp. Old Silenus, with the fauns,
Satyrs and nymphs, have left the lawns.
Welcome the Mimallonian crew!
Prepare the rites to Bacchus due.

2nd Sp. The priests and Bacchæ now draw near:
Evohe! Evohe! greets mine ear.
Prepare the rites; when mortals sleep,
We then shall higher orgies keep.

3d Sp. Now too behold the Paphian train
Laughing approach gay Eros' fane.
The Erycinean Goddess there
Presides, to list her votaries' prayer;
There too bright Hymen ready stands,
To knit them in his silken bands.
Haste, deck it with your rosy wreaths,
The time that Zephyrus gently breathes.
With Pleasure who a war would wage,
Save trembling eld? Yet how engage
This peevish youth? Come, taste our joys,
Immortal sure, where nothing cloys.

4th Sp. He listens. Zephyrus, Cupid's sire,
Will kindly watch the lambent fire
Which round the young Marcellus plays,
And fan it to a brighter blaze;
Such as on Venus' altar glows,
When, to relieve her pungent woes
For dear Adonis slain, we bring
Oblations suitable, and fling
Incense thereon, whose vapors rise
In grateful odors to the skies.

Zephon. Haste, beauteous Flora! hither bring
The various sweets of laughing Spring;
For well we know the gentle Hours
Cull from your garden choicest flow'rs,
Which, with the bay and myrtle twin'd,
The Graces into garlands bind,
To deck the brow of Valor, Worth,
And Wisdom—most esteem'd on earth!
Come, Judges, your rewards dispense
On him who boasts each excellence.
The youth to Pleasure's Siren-strain
Deaf as Ulysses' ear-stopt train.
Come, your impartial course pursue,
And give to Honor honors due!

Mar. Behold where Galatea comes. Retire we,
Nor interrupt in aught her peaceful pleasures.

Galat. What have I heard? To Dionysius' court,
With specious show of friendship, my father invited!
'Tis said my personal charms, though mean and few,
Have met with high report, and thence this bidding,
This seeming kindness, and this seeming honor!
Envied, no doubt, by some. But though to command
Might yet be his, guile must with us be practis'd.
The many excellences of my honor'd parent,
Belov'd of the whole island, arrests his violence.——
Tyrant though in heart he be, his fears prevail,
The people so lately in insurrection against him.
Yet preluding thus he thin's may better engage us.
No, dear Simonides, to his insidious words
Thou shalt not listen. To art let art be oppos'd.
Devise we something, then, to cheat this slave,
Whom fond and trembling nations style a King.
A King! dishonor'd title! Kings should boast
A more than earthly goodness. Celestial attributes
In part belong to them. The sword they hold

Should be the sword of Justice—of Justice only;
Yet oft 'tis drawn to most nefarious purpose.——
If we can lull this Dionysius, well;
But should he still persist to call us hence,
I will awake him to a sense of danger;
Forbearance then will follow; for, firmly oppos'd,
His coward heart hath not unfrequently betray'd him.——
O native woods! O wilds! where, ev'n in infancy,
I lov'd at large to roam! O nymphs! O dryads!
O ye, inhabitants of this blest domain,
This place where Treachery never yet found dwelling!
And shall I then for Dionysius' splendors
Your sacred haunts abandon? Never, never!
Since force he dare not use, here will I stay,
Here will I ever dwell, and to the rocks
My fond complainings utter. The rocks and caves
Will, by their echoes, tell the sylvan train,
Wont in my griefs to share, this newer sorrow.
'Tis they must give me comfort. The golden lyre,
By Nomias' self invented, when in the vale
Of Arcady he led the pastoral life,
The life of Nature, far from me is thrown;
The lyre by Simonides priz'd beyond a diadem!
Even by the master's hand now touch'd, the sounds,
Lately all harmony, would to my ear be discord.
But here he comes who is to me an empire—
My much-lov'd father! Say, why wilt thou leave
Thy couch till higher day? Scarce has the bird of Jove
Prun'd his moist wing, and from his airy dwelling
Through earth's dense vapors sought the solar road,
Than from repose, so needful to thy age,
So highly needful, thou art come——

Simon. To seek a daughter,
A child to me more precious than the founts,
The vital founts, which play within my heart;

To offer likewise at that sainted shrine,
The tomb of her who brought thee into being,
My orisons to the great Power who all things orders;
His ubiquity certain, and of whose immensity
Nature speaks loudly, even in her atoms speaks it,
And brings confusion on that impious tongue
Which dares to question Heaven's eternal goodness.

Galat. Celestial spirits! ye who the faith of old,
And honor, love,—protect, O still protect him,
This first of fathers, and this first of men!

Simon. Cease, cease these fears. Life has for me no charms,
But such as are deriv'd from thee alone.
There is my boast! For thee then I would live
Beyond man's date; but death— —O death! what art thou,
Something, or nothing, substance, or shadow only?
Thou who affrightest men in the social hour,
Even when the Queen of Love and God of Wine
Sit smiling at their board. Dreadful thy nature to all,
Save those who by Philosophy's mild precepts
Moulded and fashion'd are: who not repine
At aught that may await them; equal in all things!

Mar. To thee, Simonides, and to thy fair daughter,
Marcellus wisheth health. Our mighty master,
As fame hath told, invites you to partake
His princely pleasures: yet you here remain
Recluse, as though such honors were as nothing,
Or you of all unworthy.

Simon. Well hast thou augur'd:
Such we must hold them. Honors to us are nought,
But from a soul of honor: yet, fearing Dionysius,
His power still great, I dissimulation have practis'd,
Though to my nature foreign, and humbly declin'd them.
Yet Galatea harsher answer would have given him.

Mar. His power, so seemingly great, unstable is.

By mercenaries supported, he much dreads his people.
No act of violence hath he lately perpetrated;
But yet I fear he will not brook denial.
And see his Captain here, no doubt to seek ye.

Capt. From Dionysius am I come—who sorrows
That good Simonides' age will not admit
Removal to the palace: but for his daughter,
The lovely Galatea, I have orders
To urge her instant hence, and to merited honors.

Galat. Honors to me? from him too! This is insult.

Capt. Madam, you bear yourself by much too proudly.
Know, to superior power the mind should bend,
And learn humility from adverse fortune.

Galat. Yes; base, ignoble souls may crouch to power,
The storms of fate to them may dreadful seem:
I see the tempest gathering o'er my head,
Yet stand unmov'd, nor deprecate his vengeance.

Capt. It yet may reach you.

Galat. Why that is nobly said.
To add to miseries which himself has wrought
Were glorious triumph! would befit the hero!
Then, to distraction driven, I——

Mar. Distraction? O mortal!
Thou wondrous microcosm, how dost thou show
When Reason abdicates her beamy throne,
Giving to lawless Rage supremacy;
When all is anarchy and wild uproar
Within thy nobly plann'd, though little state!
Be calmer, fair one.

Capt. More temper, scornful beauty.

Galat. For what is valor, what are deeds in arms,
Unless Injustice crown them by a smile?
Poor and unmeaning all! Go seek this conqueror,
Go bid him hail the Eumenides; they will twine
Their snakes and scorpions for his manly brow;

A wreath that well will grace it.

Capt. Away! Is this a language which the weak
Should hold towards the strong? Best buy his friendship.

Galat. Perish his friendship!
I would not buy it on the easiest terms;
But rather dwell amid Hyrcanian wilds,
My drink the dew-drop, and my food the berry,
My bed the cold, dank earth, and for my clothing
The skins of beasts which least resemble him.
All this were better than to call him friend.—
Go, then, to Dionysius bear my answer:
I will not leave my dear, my honor'd parent.
Your King boasts power; but know, in strength my father
Surpasses him by far—a thousand fold!
His guard are Prudence, Fortitude, and Justice.
Go, bear my answer straight. We do not fear him.

Capt. This contumely your father's head may atone for.

Simon. He goes in anger, and, no doubt, will report
In all unfavorably of us. O Galatea!
Who would not be a father, if all children
Were like to thee—the very type of Heaven!
I am of all who bear that name the happiest,
The proudest, and the greatest. Men shall proverb me.
The sabre hangs across my neck, and yet
I would not change my state with any prince,
However loud his fame, howe'er distinguish'd.
Enough that Galatea is my daughter!

Galat. O cease this praise; nor teach me to believe
That duty must be merit.

Mar. Be of good cheer.
Thy daughter's boldness may successful prove;
Submissiveness were ruin. Much I honor her;
Yet, 'mid this courage, her heart loud speaks its anguish.
Sweet Galatea! much, too much she suffers.—
Be witness for me, all ye blessed host,

I seek not to expound the ways of Heaven,
Inscrutable to man; and yet the mind,
Distracted long with complicated ills,
Is lost in doubt—in Error's maze she wanders—
Thinks Virtue should not be the sport of Fortune,
Sorrows at seeing her a poor, pale trembler,
While rosy Vice stands laughing at her side;
Then questions heavenly justice, and repines,
Unheedful of the future. Weak, weak humanity! –
Maiden, dismiss all fear of Dionysius.
Soon will mild Evening call pale Luna forth:
She, when thou once regain'st thy groves, will calm
Thy now too ruffled spirits. I must away,
To do a father's pleasure.

Galat. Yes, 'twere indeed most charming,
To walk the margin of some rippling brook
O'er-canopied with oziers thickly set,
While the night's empress, that transcendent beauty
In her white mantle, decorously clad,
Paces it by us, all majestical!
To hear the tender, plaintive bird of even
Pour out his notes chromatic. O 'twere ecstasy!
Such as the vulgar soul, whose thoughts are earthly,
Knows not, nor e'er can know. 'Tis all from Heaven!
Come, (ever honor'd,) we will once more gain
Our peaceful dwelling, far from pomp and power.

Simon That we be driven from it, kind Heaven forefend!

[EVIL GENIUS enters.]

Mar. In vain you tempt me, since to every pleasure,
Save those which Heaven approves, my sense is dead.

Evil Gen. Come, we will lead thee to the field of glory,
The embattled field, where Valor's sons combine
In fiercest fight—the prize a mighty empire.

Mar. Call you this glory? Far from me be such ambition.

[GOOD GENIUS enters.]

Good Gen. He hath a valor to defend, not wrest
From others their possessions. Son, humanity,
And all the manlier virtues, make *his* glory.
Know then that war, aggressive war's not of them.

Zephon. See where the God of Battles comes!
Terror sits upon his brow,
Rage augments his swelling veins.
Mark! from forth his burning eye
Beamy lightnings flash around;
Hark! along the vaulted sky
His threats in deep-ton'd thunder sound.
Now he shakes his ponderous spear!
Yet hear, O Mars! a moment hear!
Let our lov'd sons in peaceful honours vie,
Go! and in vice-swollen realms thy fierce, intemperate valor try.
And thou, Bellona, who wert wont
Across the embattled field to drive
Thy foaming coursers, urging still
Thy brother to the burlied fight,
The while fell Discord, rudely dight
In tatter'd garments, flies thy car before,
Her garments drench'd, O dismal sight! with human gore
To thee we, fear-inspiring Goddess, bend;
Awhile thy dread propensities suspend;
Think on the orphan's piercing cries,
Think on the matron's streaming eyes,
Think on the dying father's speechless woe,
O think on these, and yet forbear the blow.
Quick from forth the blood-stain'd plain
Turn thy chariot's falchion'd wheels.
O contemplate yon heaps of slain!

Think on the pangs each country feels!
They once perhaps of useful arts the nurse,
Now mutual pouring forth the ban, the dire, inhuman
curse!

Mar. See! Dionysius' Captain again to seek us.

Capt. O dread event! the King our master's slain.

Mar. Slain, say'st thou?—where?—by whom?

Capt. Even in the temple's porch.
Some disaffected persons there lay wait,
Secure in numbers, menacing they met him.
After repeated blows, the monarch fell,
His guard not interposing.

Mar. Dreadful end!
Yet common to the oppressor. But tell me, Captain,
How show'd your master in this fatal moment?

Capt. Like some poor shipwreck'd mariner he show'd,
When standing on a splinter'd, wave-wash'd rock,
Which each rude wind shakes at its utmost base,
And threatens with destruction! So seem'd he.
Trembling he view'd the storm, yet stood its brunt,
Unknowing where to flee.

Good Genius. Peace now is ours.
His son has virtues worthy of a throne,
They best can expiate all his father's crimes.—
Convey these tidings to Simonides' palace;
(For such I deem the hut where honor dwells,)
Assure to him and Galatea safety,
The while ye ask them to assist with us
In prayer to Heaven for the new monarch's welfare.
For thee, Marcellus, think no more of war,
That life to which thou wert so late devoted.
A soldier's name thou hadst, and still must bear it:
Yet all that appertains thereto is this,—
That soon—so very full of years is Marcus—
Thy vows to Hæres Martia will be given.

Mar. But where is now my tempter? gone for ever?

Good Genius. Shrunk to the den of night, fully discomfited.

Mar. Now then what praise shall to thee be given,
Thou minister of good, celestial tutor!

Good Genius. I ask no praises; of thyself be proud,
For no compelling power hath Heaven assign'd me.
Thou hast the fiery ordeal pass'd unhurt;
Sure proof of innocence; while thy sure reward
On earth are heart-felt joys; and ever after,
Raptures which not the soul can e'er conceive,
Nor could the tongue express. Farewell, blest mortal!
Now to the realms of light I steer my course,
Yet soon again will see thee, lov'd Marcellus.

ZEPHON *and other Spirits.*

Glorious mortal! to high birth
Add we now thine innate worth.
Glorious mortal! full approv'd,
By all must thou be full belov'd.
O youth! that nearly may'st compare
With us, blest denizens of air.
Much favor hadst thou at the hand
Of Abdiel, prince of our blest band;
A band thou'lt join, when thy freed soul,
Through ether darting to the goal
Where Virtue rests, and to renown,
On earth acquir'd, presents the crown,
The immortal prize by firm decree,—
Gift worthy her, and worthy thee!

THE END.

NOTE ON THE GENII.

We have given this Masque rather than a lighter piece, because it seemed to accord very well with the preceding drama; thus furnishing our readers with an entertainment more in the style of the age before the usurpation of Cromwell than we expected to have had it so early in our power to do.

Like the Opera, the Masque is a species of dramatic composition which ought not to be judged of by the rules of the regular drama. The Masque never was, indeed, properly a theatrical performance: hence it is that no one, as we will venture to assert, ever witnessed the representation even of Milton's delightful Comus without being sensible that it had very little dramatic merit, and was an exceedingly tedious and uninteresting spectacle. Masques were originally the poetical decorations of royal and other high banquets; and though performed with suitable music and dresses, they were not stage representations.

"*To what vile uses may we not return!*"

Who would now imagine that the notionless words of the intellectual masters and misses, who attempt to

figure in the shape of Turks, sultanas, gypsies, nuns and friars, or any of the other mad and ridiculous personations which now-a-days surprise people of common sense at "the public entertainments in private houses," are the perishing relics of a species of entertainment for which Whitehall was built, and Rubens, with Inigo Jones, were employed to plan decorations becoming the verses of Ben Jonson; nay, for which even Milton was emulous to furnish poetry: What glory might not any lady of large expenditure (income is not necessary) acquire for herself were she, in the present threadbare vulgarity of balls and routes, to succeed in getting up a Masque, in a proper style, on one of her nights. It is a species of performance wherein the expression of no passion is required, but only a pleasing tale, or allegory, and discourses of poetical beauty; and for this reason it would be found much better suited to the ordinary capacity of the generality of private actors than the tragedies which they reduce to farces, or the farces which they render more afflicting than even the deepest tragedies.

END OF VOL. I